THE THREE PURE LAND SUTRAS

BDK English Tripiṭaka Series

THE THREE PURE LAND SUTRAS

The Larger Sutra on Amitāyus

(Taishō Volume 12, Number 360)

The Sutra on Contemplation of Amitāyus

(Taishō Volume 12, Number 365)

The Smaller Sutra on Amitāyus

(Taishō Volume 12, Number 366)

Translated from the Chinese

by

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in collaboration with
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A Message on the Publication of the English Tripiṭaka

The Buddhist canon is said to contain eighty-four thousand different teachings. I believe that this is because the Buddha's basic approach was to prescribe a different treatment for every spiritual ailment, much as a doctor prescribes a different medicine for every medical ailment. Thus his teachings were always appropriate for the particular suffering individual and for the time at which the teaching was given, and over the ages not one of his prescriptions has failed to relieve the suffering to which it was addressed.

Ever since the Buddha's Great Demise over twenty-five hundred years ago, his message of wisdom and compassion has spread throughout the world. Yet no one has ever attempted to translate the entire Buddhist canon into English throughout the history of Japan. It is my greatest wish to see this done and to make the translations available to the many English-speaking people who have never had the opportunity to learn about the Buddha's teachings.

Of course, it would be impossible to translate all of the Buddha's eighty-four thousand teachings in a few years. I have, therefore, had one hundred thirty-nine of the scriptural texts in the prodigious Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon selected for inclusion in the First Series of this translation project.

It is in the nature of this undertaking that the results are bound to be criticized. Nonetheless, I am convinced that unless someone takes it upon himself or herself to initiate this project, it will never be done. At the same time, I hope that an improved, revised edition will appear in the future.

It is most gratifying that, thanks to the efforts of more than a hundred Buddhist scholars from the East and the West, this monumental project has finally gotten off the ground. May the rays of the Wisdom of the Compassionate One reach each and every person in the world.

NUMATA Yehan
Founder of the English
Tripiṭaka Project

August 7, 1991

Editorial Foreword

In January 1982, Dr. NUMATA Yehan, the founder of Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), decided to begin the monumental task of translating the complete Taishō edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka (Buddhist canon) into the English language. Under his leadership, a special preparatory committee was organized in April 1982. By July of the same year, the Translation Committee of the English Tripiṭaka was officially convened.

The initial Committee consisted of the following members: (late) HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairperson), BANDŌ Shōjun, ISHIGAMI Zennō, KAMATA Shigeo, KANAOKA Shūyū, MAYEDA Sengaku, NARA Yasuaki, SAYEKI Shinkō, SHIOIRI Ryōtatsu, TAMARU Noriyoshi, (late) TAMURA Kwansei, URYŪZU Ryūshin, and YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members of the Committee were as follows: KANAZAWA Atsushi, WATANABE Shōgo, Rolf Giebel of New Zealand, and Rudy Smet of Belgium.

After holding planning meetings on a monthly basis, the Committee selected one hundred thirty-nine texts for the First Series of translations, an estimated one hundred printed volumes in all. The texts selected are not necessarily limited to those originally written in India but also include works written or composed in China and Japan. While the publication of the First Series proceeds, the texts for the Second Series will be selected from among the remaining works; this process will continue until all the texts, in Japanese as well as in Chinese, have been published.

Frankly speaking, it will take perhaps one hundred years or more to accomplish the English translation of the complete Chinese and Japanese texts, for they consist of thousands of works. Nevertheless, as Dr. NUMATA wished, it is the sincere hope of the Committee that this project will continue unto completion, even after all its present members have passed away.

It must be mentioned here that the final object of this project is not academic fulfillment but the transmission of the teaching of the Buddha to the whole world in order to create harmony and peace among humankind. To that

end, the translators have been asked to minimize the use of explanatory notes of the kind that are indispensable in academic texts, so that the attention of general readers will not be unduly distracted from the primary text. Also, a glossary of selected terms is appended to aid in understanding the text.

To my great regret, however, Dr. NUMATA passed away on May 5, 1994, at the age of ninety-seven, entrusting his son, Mr. NUMATA Toshihide, with the continuation and completion of the Translation Project. The Committee also lost its able and devoted Chairperson, Professor HANAYAMA Shōyū, on June 16, 1995, at the age of sixty-three. After these severe blows, the Committee elected me, Vice President of Musashino Women's College, to be the Chair in October 1995. The Committee has renewed its determination to carry out the noble intention of Dr. NUMATA, under the leadership of Mr. NUMATA Toshihide.

The present members of the Committee are MAYEDA Sengaku (Chairperson), BANDŌ Shōjun, ISHIGAMI Zennō, ICHISHIMA Shōshin, KANAOKA Shūyū, NARA Yasuaki, TAMARU Noriyoshi, URYŪZU Ryūshin, YUYAMA Akira, Kenneth K. Tanaka, WATANABE Shōgo, and assistant member YONEZAWA Yoshiyasu.

The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research was established in November 1984, in Berkeley, California, U.S.A., to assist in the publication of the BDK English Tripiṭaka First Series. In December 1991, the Publication Committee was organized at the Numata Center, with Professor Philip Yampolsky as the Chairperson. To our sorrow, Professor Yampolsky passed away in July 1996. In February 1997, Dr. Kenneth K. Inada became Chair and served in that capacity until August 1999. The current Chair, Dr. Francis H. Cook, has been continuing the work since October 1999. All of the remaining texts will be published under the supervision of this Committee, in close cooperation with the Editorial Committee in Tokyo.

MAYEDA Sengaku
Chairperson
Editorial Committee of
the BDK English Tripiṭaka

Publisher's Foreword

The Publication Committee shares with the Editorial Committee the responsibility of realizing the vision of Dr. Yehan Numata, founder of Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai, the Society for the Promotion of Buddhism. This vision is no less than to make the Buddha's teaching better known throughout the world, through the translation and publication in English of the entire collection of Buddhist texts compiled in the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō,* published in Tokyo in the early part of the twentieth century. This huge task is expected to be carried out by several generations of translators and may take as long as a hundred years to complete. Ultimately, the entire canon will be available to anyone who can read English and who wishes to learn more about the teaching of the Buddha.

The present generation of staff members of the Publication Committee are Diane Ames, Marianne Dresser, Eisho Nasu, Koh Nishiike, and Reverend Kiyoshi Yamashita, president of the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, Berkeley, California. The Publication Committee is headquartered at the Numata Center and, working in close cooperation with the Editorial Committee, is responsible for the usual tasks associated with preparing translations for publication.

In October 1999, I became the third chairperson of the Publication Committee, on the retirement of its very capable former chair, Dr. Kenneth K. Inada. The Committee is devoted to the advancement of the Buddha's teaching through the publication of excellent translations of the thousands of texts that make up the Buddhist canon.

Francis H. Cook
Chairperson
Publication Committee

Contents

Translator’s Introduction

The Pure Land school is a form of Mahayana Buddhism that centers around the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life, known in Sanskrit as Amitābha and Amitāyus, in Chinese as O-mi-tuo fo, and in Japanese as Amida. This buddha is said to dwell in the Land of Utmost Bliss (Sukhāvatī), far to the west of this world, beyond the realm of samsara. With boundless wisdom and compassion, Amitābha perceives the problems of those who are suffering from karmic results in samsaric existence and provides means of liberation for them.

The most important scriptures of the Pure Land school are the three texts presented in this volume: 1) the *Sutra on the Buddha of Infinite Life* (also known as the *Larger Sutra on Amitāyus,* abbreviated to *Larger Sutra;* the Sanskrit text is popularly known as the *Larger Sukhāvatīvyūha Sutra*); 2) the *Sutra on Visualization of the Buddha of Infinite Life* (abbreviated to *Contemplation Sutra*); and 3) the *Sutra on Amitāyus Buddha* (also known as the *Amida Sutra* or the *Smaller Sutra on Amitāyus,* abbreviated to *Smaller Sutra;* the Sanskrit text is popularly known as the *Smaller Sukhāvatīvyūha Sutra*).

These sutras were chosen by Hōnen of Japan (1133–1212) and called the three Pure Land sutras. Actually there are many other sutras and discourses that mention Amitābha and his Land of Bliss. According to Prof. Kōtatsu Fujita, the total number of such scriptures in the Chinese Buddhist canon is two hundred and ninety. The Chinese canon, which was collected and edited in Japan under the title of the Taishō Tripiṭaka, contains two thousand one hundred and eighty-four texts. Thus, more than 13 percent of all the scriptures held to be authentic in the Chinese tradition recognize this buddha and his land.

Amitābha was mentioned from the advent of the rise of Mahayana Buddhism in India, and eminent exponents of Mahayana metaphysical thought, such as Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu, took refuge in Amitābha and extensively promoted Pure Land faith and practice. From the beginning, worship of Amitābha was clearly distinguished from Hindu worship of gods, because it had its roots in

the bodhisattva ideal. The Pure Land of Amitābha was also conceived of as more real than this ephemeral world of ours in samsara.

The Pure Land sutras and discourses were first transmitted to Central Asia and then to China. The first Chinese translation of the *Larger Sutra* was produced in the middle of the second century. Of the five extant translations of this sutra, the last was made in 980. Thus the whole history of Chinese Buddhism was strongly characterized by Amitābha worship, and the Mahayana schools that developed in China recognized the importance of this buddha and adopted into their systems practice and faith centering on Amitābha. Many discourses and commentaries were composed by dedicated Pure Land masters, and many images of the Pure Land were produced. Among lay followers as well as monks and nuns, the practice of repeating Amitābha's Name, called *nian-fo* (Jpn. *nembutsu*), was and is enthusiastically performed by many Chinese Buddhists at home and abroad, to say nothing of millions of followers of the Pure Land denominations that developed in Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and other Asian countries.

As a higher practice of Pure Land Buddhism, meditation on Amitābha and his Pure Land, based on the *Contemplation Sutra* and the *Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra* (Taishō No. 418, translated by Paul Harrison, Numata Center, 1998), has been widespread from ancient times. Many devotees successfully followed the prescribed method and attained the *samādhi* of visualizing Amitābha and his Pure Land. Today, as it is impossible to follow the precise and complex method of visualization, simplified or syncretic forms of meditation are practiced by various groups and individuals.

Contrary to the impression of the general public, Pure Land Buddhism is not a belief of ignorant people of the past. It is very much alive and still continues to supply inexhaustible spiritual energy to intellectuals as well as less educated people. But its doctrinal systems have yet to be fully studied from various perspectives. Despite the importance of the three Pure Land sutras, which are the primary source of devotion to Amitābha, Western scholars and Buddhist followers had long been without a readable English translation of these sutras until publication of the first edition of this volume in 1995, as part of the BDK English Tripiṭaka series. We are now privileged to publish this revised second edition, which includes notes and an appendix.

We take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Yehan Numata for initiating this historic project. Our sincere thanks are also due to

the Editorial Committee and the Publication Committee for their time and labor in editing the manuscripts and seeing them through publication.

Those interested in the theoretical clarification and doctrinal development of Pure Land Buddhism are directed to the Introduction to *The Three Pure Land Sutras: A Study and Translation,* published by Nagata Bunshodo, Kyoto, 1994, 1995, and 2000 (revised edition).

The section numbers supplied in this translation follow those in the 1988 edition of the three Pure Land sutras in the *Jōdo shinshū seiten* (Hompa Hongwanji Temple, Kyoto), pp. 3–128.

Concerning proper nouns, the names of the Buddha’s disciples and those of well-known buddhas and bodhisattvas are given in Sanskrit; otherwise they are translated. The only exception is that the names of the buddhas in the *Smaller Sutra,* of which Sanskrit correspondents are fairly well established, are all presented in Sanskrit.

“The Buddha of Infinite Life” (Wu-liang-shou fo) and “O-mi-tuo fo” are rendered as “Amitāyus.” Elsewhere this buddha is referred to as “Amitābha.”

Outlines of the Three Sutras

The *Larger Sutra*

At one time Śākyamuni Buddha was staying on Vulture Peak near Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha, in northeast India, accompanied by twelve thousand monks and innumerable bodhisattvas. Each bodhisattva had already attained distinguished virtues and supreme wisdom. At that time, Śākyamuni's appearance was extremely majestic and brilliant. Ānanda, the chief disciple in the audience, observed that the Buddha must be dwelling in the supreme *samādhi* and contemplating all the buddhas. Śākyamuni praised Ānanda's pertinent observation, and began to reveal the wonderful Dharma.

In the distant past Buddha Dīpaṅkara appeared in the world, followed by fifty-three other buddhas, of whom the last was Lokeśvararāja ("World Sovereign King"). Under his guidance, a king renounced the throne and became a monk named Dharmākara ("Storehouse of the Dharma"). After praising the Buddha with a hymn (section 5), he expressed his resolution to become a buddha. At his earnest request, Lokeśvararāja showed him innumerable buddha lands, which he studied to make plans for his own buddhahood. After five *kalpa*s' contemplation, Dharmākara formulated his resolution as the Forty-eight Vows (section 7). After proclaiming the vows, he presented the gist of them in a hymn (section 8).

In order to fulfill his vows, Dharmākara performed various meritorious practices for many eons and finally became a buddha known as Amitāyus ("Infinite Life"). His land is full of glorious adornments, and his light is the most brilliant and majestic of all buddhas'. His lifespan is also immeasurable, and his disciples are innumerable. Those born in his land enjoy the highest spiritual bliss and attain supreme physical glory.

Part Two of the sutra begins with the description of how the eleventh, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth vows have been fulfilled (sections 22–25). There it is clarified that those who, having heard the Name of Amitāyus, rejoice in faith and are mindful of him will be born in the Pure Land and dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. Three grades of aspirants who sincerely perform meritorious practices and are mindful of Amitāyus will, on their deathbeds, see him and a host of sages welcoming them to the Pure Land.

The virtues of Amitāyus are so glorious that all buddhas praise them. Innumerable bodhisattvas from other buddha lands visit the Pure Land to pay

homage to Amitāyus and receive teachings from him. Śākyamuni describes this in a hymn (section 27). All the bodhisattvas in the Pure Land are endowed with majestic physical characteristics and distinguished spiritual powers. Dwelling in the highest bodhisattva stage, they display wonderful buddha activities. They thus attain excellent virtues that are beyond compare (section 30).

Śākyamuni then began to address Maitreya in particular thus: people of the world are ignorant and driven by passions and so are destined for the evil realms of samsara, where they undergo endless suffering (section 31). The Buddha's admonishment continued: people are given to anger and greed, and are prone to five kinds of evil. If they refrain from immoral acts and strive to do good, then with the merits so acquired they will be reborn in higher and happier states of existence and finally reach nirvana (sections 34–40).

The Buddha told Ānanda to worship Amitāyus. At once Amitāyus manifested himself with a majestic appearance and his light shone everywhere, so that Ānanda and all the others in the assembly clearly saw the Pure Land. They witnessed two types of birth: 1) that of those born from within the lotus flowers, and 2) that of those remaining in the lotus buds. Those aspirants who have accepted the Buddha's wisdom with pure faith are to be born by instantaneous transformation and fully enjoy the highest bliss, but those with doubts must remain in the lotus buds for five hundred years (section 43). The fault of harboring doubt is shown by the parable of a prince confined in a palace room as a punishment for his offenses (section 45).

There are a great number of bodhisattvas in other buddha lands who visit the Pure Land. Fourteen buddha lands, including the Sahā world, which is Śākyamuni's land, are mentioned. Because of the special importance of this sutra, Śākyamuni promised that even after all the other sutras become extinct in the future, he would preserve it in the world for a hundred more years.

The sutra ends with a description of various spiritual benefits received by different audiences.

The *Contemplation Sutra*

Prelude

Shandao of China (613–681) gives in his commentary on this sutra a detailed account of the misfortune that befell the royal family of Magadha in northeast India, which led to the Buddha's preaching of this sutra.

Śākyamuni had a cousin, Devadatta, who was greedy for fame and wealth. Seeing the Buddha receive many offerings from King Bimbisāra, he wanted to take over the leadership of the sangha. He first learned supernatural power from Ānanda, which he displayed to Prince Ajātaśatru; thus he won the respect of the prince and also received sumptuous offerings from him. Devadatta then approached Śākyamuni and suggested that the Buddha retire but was rebuked for his stupidity. Angered by this, he next incited Ajātaśatru to usurp the throne. Seeing that Ajātaśatru hesitated, Devadatta pointed at the prince's broken little finger and told him the following story.

A long time ago King Bimbisāra was anxious to have an heir. Having heard from a soothsayer that a certain hermit living in the mountains would be reborn as his son three years later, the king immediately sent a messenger to the hermit suggesting that he terminate his own life, but the hermit refused to do so. The angry king ordered the messenger to kill him if the hermit still refused to commit suicide. On his death, the hermit vowed to take revenge.

Soon Queen Vaidehī became pregnant. The king rejoiced, but was horrified to hear from the soothsayer that she would bear a boy who would harm the king. So he told the queen to give birth to the baby on the roof of the tower and let it drop to the ground. She did as she was told, but the baby miraculously survived with only damage to his little finger.

Devadatta told Ajātaśatru that the king had thus tried to kill him a second time. Enraged to hear this, the prince imprisoned the king and left him to die.

Outline of the Sutra

At one time Śākyamuni Buddha was staying on Vulture Peak together with one thousand two hundred and fifty monks and thirty-two thousand bodhisattvas. Incited by Devadatta, Ajātaśatru imprisoned King Bimbisāra and later Queen Vaidehī too, because she brought food and drink to the king. In utter despair she requested the Buddha to help her. The Buddha immediately sent two disciples to her, and afterward himself appeared in the prison where she was confined. As she wished to be born in a land with no sorrow, he showed her many buddha lands to let her make her choice. To the Buddha's satisfaction, she chose the Pure Land of Amitāyus. Vaidehī was thus able to visualize the Pure Land through the Buddha's power. For the sake of later generations, the Buddha expounded a method of contemplation in thirteen stages (sections 9–21):

1. Contemplating the setting sun until one has a clear vision of it whether one's eyes are open or closed. This and the next visualizations are preliminary contemplations of the surroundings of the Pure Land.

2. Envisioning that the western region is flooded by water and that the water turns into ice, then into beryl. The ground of the Pure Land is made of beryl and is supported by columns made of various jewels.

3. Contemplating the ground of the Pure Land until one visualizes it in a state of *samādhi.* This and the following four are visualizations of the actual surroundings.

4. Contemplating the jeweled trees ornate with glorious adornments.

5. Contemplating the water of eight excellent qualities in the ponds.

6. Contemplating various objects, such as myriads of jeweled towers.

7. Contemplating the lotus throne of Amitāyus. Prior to the Buddha's exposition of this, Amitāyus, accompanied by his two attendant bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, had appeared before Vaidehī.

8. Contemplating images of Amitāyus and his two attendant bodhisattvas. This is the stage preliminary to visualizing the actual Buddha and bodhisattvas. One who accomplishes this contemplation attains the *samādhi* of mindfulness of the Buddha (*nian-fo,* or *nembutsu samādhi*).

9. Contemplating Amitāyus himself with boundless physical dimensions. One who visualizes him also beholds all the buddhas, and so attains the *samādhi* of mindfulness of the Buddha.

10. Contemplating Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin).

11. Contemplating Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Shizhi).

12. Contemplating the aspirants themselves as they are born in the Pure Land.

13. Contemplating the images of Amitāyus and his two bodhisattvas everywhere in the Pure Land.

The next three contemplations are of the nine categories of Pure Land aspirants in three grades (sections 22–30). The highest grade corresponds to the fourteenth contemplation, the middle grade to the fifteenth, and the lowest grade to the sixteenth. Each grade is divided into three levels: highest, middle, and lowest.

1. The highest level of the highest grade: devout followers of the Mahayana who awaken sincere faith and who do meritorious deeds. At their death, Amitāyus and a host of sages appear to welcome them to the Pure Land. Having been born there, they can see the Buddha, hear the Dharma, and attain higher spiritual states.

2. The middle level of the highest grade: those who comprehend Mahayana teachings and have deep faith in the law of karma. At their death, Amitāyus and a host of sages appear to welcome them to the Pure Land. Seven days after birth there, they attain the stage of non-retrogression.

3. The lowest level of the highest grade: those who believe in the law of karma and awaken aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*). At their death, Amitāyus and a host of sages appear to welcome them to the Pure Land. They are confined in lotus buds for one day; seven days after their flowers open they can see the Buddha and gradually attain spiritual benefits.

4. The highest level of the middle grade: those who observe the five as well as other precepts. At their death, Amitāyus and a host of sages appear to welcome them to the Pure Land. When their lotus flowers open they hear the Dharma and become arhats.

5. The middle level of the middle grade: those who observe various precepts even for one day. At their death, Amitāyus and a host of sages appear to welcome them to the Pure Land. Seven days after their birth there, their flowers open and they attain the stage of stream-winner (*śrota-āpanna*); half a *kalpa* later they become arhats.

6. The lowest level of the middle grade: those who do worldly good deeds, such as being dutiful to parents. After death they attain birth in the Pure Land; seven days later their flowers open and after a smaller *kalpa* they become arhats.

7. The highest level of the lowest grade: evildoers who commit various transgressions. Before they die, they hear the names of Mahayana sutras and are also told to recite the Name of Amitāyus. At their death, Amitāyus sends his transformed body and transformed bodhisattvas to escort them to the Pure Land. Seven weeks later their flowers open and the aspirants can hear the Dharma from Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Ten smaller *kalpa*s later they attain the first stage of a bodhisattva.

8. The middle level of the lowest grade: those who break various precepts and commit offenses against the sangha and the Dharma. When, at their death, they are about to fall into hell, they hear of the virtues and power of Amitāyus from a good teacher. With the merit so acquired they attain birth in the Pure Land but are confined in lotus buds for six *kalpa*s; then they can hear the Mahayana teachings and awaken aspiration for enlightenment.

9. The lowest level of the lowest grade: evildoers who commit the gravest offenses, which would bring them the retribution of suffering in hell. Before death they meet a good teacher, who urges them to call the Name of Amitābha. As they repeat the Name ten times, their evil karma is extinguished. When they die they see before them golden lotus flowers that bring them to the Pure Land. After twelve great *kalpa*s the flowers open; then they can hear the Mahayana teachings and awaken aspiration for enlightenment.

When the above discourse was delivered, Vaidehī attained spiritual awakening and her five hundred court ladies aspired to enlightenment. After Śākyamuni and his attendants returned to Vulture Peak, Ānanda related the whole sutra to the assembly.

The *Smaller Sutra*

One day the Buddha was staying at Śrāvastī, in northeast India, together with one thousand two hundred and fifty monks and many bodhisattvas. He began to address the audience, headed by Śāriputra, thus: There is in the west a buddha land called Sukhāvatī ("Land of Utmost Bliss"), where Buddha Amitāyus presides. The land is full of wonders, pleasing to the mind and comforting to the senses, and those born there can enjoy the highest spiritual bliss. This buddha is called Amitāyus because his lifespan is immeasurable; he is also called Amitābha because his light shines out boundlessly. All beings there dwell in the stage of non-retrogression, assured of attaining enlightenment. In order to be born there one must concentrate on Amitāyus, holding fast to his Name for one to seven days. Then, at the time of death, Amitāyus, accompanied by a host of sages, appears before the devotee and ensures his attainment of birth in the Pure Land.

Innumerable buddhas dwelling in the six directions (i.e., the four cardinal directions of north, south, east, and west, plus the zenith and nadir) urge sentient beings to accept this sutra that is protected by all the buddhas. One who has faith in it is also protected by them and led to reach enlightenment without retrogression. For this reason, all beings should aspire to birth in the Pure Land. The sutra ends with praise of Śākyamuni for becoming a buddha during the period of the five defilements.

Synopses of the Three Sutras

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3. The Buddha's unusually majestic appearance. (266b27)
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44. Śākyamuni's encouragement of faith. (278b3)

45. Birth within the lotus blossom compared to the king's prison for princes who have committed offenses. (278b12)

46. Visits of bodhisattvas to the Pure Land from fourteen other buddha lands. (278b26)

47. Śākyamuni's encouragement to hear and practice this sutra, his promise to keep it in the world for another hundred years after the extinction of all other Buddhist teachings, and the difficulty of encountering this sutra, etc. (279a1)

48. Benefits gained by the audience. (279a19)

The *Contemplation Sutra*

A tragedy in the royal family of Magadha leads to the Buddha's revelation of the Pure Land Way. Thirteen meditations and the recitation of the Name of Amitāyus are presented as the cause of birth there.

1. Time and place of the assembly and its audience. (Vol. 12, 340c27)

2. King Bimbisāra's imprisonment by his son Ajātaśatru. (341a2)

3. Queen Vaidehī's imprisonment. (341a14)

4. The Buddha's visit to Vaidehī. (341b2)

5. Vaidehī's desire to be born in the land of Amitāyus in response to the Buddha's revelation of many buddha lands. (341b16)

6. The light of the Buddha's smile shining upon Bimbisāra's head. (341c1)

7. The three acts of merit for attaining birth in the land of Amitāyus. (341c5)

8. Vaidehī's request that the Buddha teach her how to visualize the land of Amitāyus. (341c5)

9. The first meditation, on the setting sun. (341c27)

10. The second meditation, on the water. (342a5)

11. The third meditation, on the ground. (342a19)

12. The fourth meditation, on the jeweled trees. (342b1)

13. The fifth meditation, on the water in the ponds. (342b23)

14. The sixth meditation, on various objects. (342c6)

15. The appearance of Amitāyus with the two bodhisattvas and the seventh meditation, on the lotus throne. (342c14)

16. The eighth meditation, on the image of Amitāyus. (343a18)

17. The ninth meditation, on the glory of Amitāyus. (343b15)

18. The tenth meditation, on Avalokiteśvara. (343c11)

19. The eleventh meditation, on Mahāsthāmaprāpta. (344a18)

20. The twelfth meditation, on the aspirants themselves as they are born in the land of Amitāyus. (344b14)

21. The thirteenth meditation, on images of Amitāyus and the two bodhisattvas. (344b25)

22. On the nine grades of birth: first, the highest level of the highest grade. (344c9)

23. Second, the middle level of the highest grade. (345a4)

24. Third, the lowest level of the highest grade. (345a22)

25. Fourth, the highest level of the middle grade. (345b8)

26. Fifth, the middle level of the middle grade. (345b18)

27. Sixth, the lowest level of the middle grade. (345c1)

28. Seventh, the highest level of the lowest grade. (345c10)

29. Eighth, the middle level of the lowest grade. (345c26)

30. Ninth, the lowest level of the lowest grade. (346a12)

31. The benefits gained by the audience. (346a27)

32. The Buddha's explanation of the names of this sutra and his admonition to Ānanda. (346b5)

33. The Buddha's return to Vulture Peak; Ānanda's explanation to the audience of what has happened. (346b18)

The *Smaller Sutra*

The glorious features of the land of Amitāyus are explained, and the Dharma through which he saves beings is praised by the buddhas of the six directions.

1. Time and place of the assembly and its audience. (Vol. 12, 346b25)

2. The Land of Utmost Bliss and Amitāyus introduced. (346c10)

3. Magnificent aspects of the Land of Utmost Bliss. (346c12)

4. The reason why this buddha is called "Amitābha" and "Amitāyus." (347a25)

5. The virtues and number of the bodhisattvas in that land and the practice required for the attainment of birth there. (347b4)

6. Praise of the virtue of Amitāyus by the buddhas in the east. (347b18)

7. Praise of the same by the buddhas in the south. (347b24)

8. Praise of the same by the buddhas in the west. (347b29)

9. Praise of the same by the buddhas in the north. (347c6)

10. Praise of the same by the buddhas in the zenith. (347c11)

11. Praise of the same by the buddhas in the nadir. (347c16)

12. The reason why this sutra is called "Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas," and Śākyamuni's urging aspiration for birth in that land. (348a7)

13. Praise of Śākyamuni's virtue by all the buddhas. (348a18)

14. End of the sutra with a description of the audience's joy. (348a26)

THE SUTRA ON THE BUDDHA OF INFINITE LIFE DELIVERED BY ŚĀKYAMUNI BUDDHA

Translated into Chinese during the Cao-Wei Dynasty
by Tripiṭaka Master Saṃghavarman of India

Part One

1 Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying on Vulture Peak in Rājagṛha with a large company of twelve thousand monks. They were all great sages who had already attained supernatural powers. Their names included the following: Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya, Venerable Aśvajit, Venerable Vāṣpa, Venerable Mahānāma, Venerable Bhadrajit, Venerable Vimala, Venerable Yaśodeva, Venerable Subāhu, Venerable Pūrṇaka, Venerable Gavāṃpati, Venerable Uruvilvākāśyapa, Venerable Gayākāśyapa, Venerable Nadīkāśyapa, Venerable Mahākāśyapa, Venerable Śāriputra, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Venerable Kapphiṇa, Venerable Mahākauṣṭhila, Venerable Mahākātyāyana, Venerable Mahācunda, Venerable Pūrṇamaitrāyaṇīputra, Venerable Aniruddha, Venerable Revata, Venerable Kimpila, Venerable Amogharāja, Venerable Pārāyaṇika, Venerable Vakkula, Venerable Nanda, Venerable Svāgata, Venerable Rāhula, and Venerable Ānanda. All of these were elders. 265c

Mahayana bodhisattvas also accompanied the Buddha, including all those of this Auspicious Kalpa, such as Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, and Bodhisattva Maitreya. There were also the sixteen lay bodhisattvas, such as Bhadrapāla, as well as Bodhisattva Profound Thought, Bodhisattva Wisdom of Faith, Bodhisattva Emptiness, Bodhisattva Bloom of Supernatural Power, Bodhisattva Hero of Light, Bodhisattva Superior Wisdom, Bodhisattva Banner of Wisdom, Bodhisattva Tranquil Ability, Bodhisattva Wisdom of Vows, Bodhisattva Sweet-smelling Elephant, Bodhisattva Hero of Treasures, Bodhisattva Dwelling in the Center, Bodhisattva Practice of Restraint, and Bodhisattva Emancipation.

2 Each of these bodhisattvas, following the virtues of Mahāsattva Samantabhadra, is endowed with the immeasurable practices and vows of the bodhisattva path and firmly dwells in all meritorious deeds. He freely travels in all the ten directions and employs skillful means of liberation. He enters the treasury of the Dharma of the buddhas and reaches the other shore. Throughout the innumerable worlds he attains enlightenment.

First, dwelling in the Tuṣita Heaven, he proclaims the True Dharma. Having left the heavenly palace, he descends into his mother's womb. Soon

after he is born from her right side, he takes seven steps. As he does so, an effulgence illuminates everywhere in the ten directions and innumerable buddha lands quake in six ways. Then he utters these words, "I shall become
266a the most honored one in the world." Śakra and Brahmā reverently attend him, and heavenly beings adore and worship him. He shows his ability in calculation, writing, archery, and horsemanship. He is also conversant with the divine arts and well read in many volumes. In the field outside the palace he trains himself in the martial arts, and at court he shows that he also enjoys the pleasures of the senses.

When he first encounters old age, sickness, and death, he realizes the impermanence of the world. He renounces his kingdom, wealth, and throne and goes into the mountains to practice the Way. After sending back the white horse that he has been riding, together with the jeweled crown and ornaments that he has been wearing, he takes off his magnificent clothes and puts on a Dharma robe. He cuts his hair and shaves his beard, sits upright under a tree, and strives at ascetic practices for six years in accord with the traditional way. Since he has appeared in the world of the five defilements, he behaves as the multitude. And as his body appears dirty, he takes a bath in the Golden River. As a god bends a branch down toward him, he is able to climb up the river bank. A divine bird follows him closely to the seat of enlightenment (*bodhimaṇḍa*). A *deva* takes the form of a youth and, perceiving a favorable sign, respectfully presents him with the auspicious grass. The Bodhisattva compassionately accepts it, spreads it under the *bodhi* tree, and sits upon it with his legs crossed. He emits a great flood of light to inform Māra of this. Māra and his army come to attack and tempt him, but he brings them under control with the power of wisdom and makes them all surrender. Then he attains the supreme Dharma and realizes highest, perfect enlightenment (*anuttara samyaksaṃbodhi*).

As Śakra and Brahmā request him to turn the wheel of the Dharma, the Buddha visits various places and preaches the Dharma in his thunderous voice. He beats the Dharma drum, blows the Dharma conch, brandishes the Dharma sword, hoists the Dharma banner, rolls the Dharma thunder, hurls the Dharma lightning, brings the Dharma rain, and bestows the Dharma gift. At all times, he awakens the world with the sound of the Dharma. His light illuminates countless buddha lands, causing the entire world to quake in six

ways. It encompasses Māra's realm, shaking his palace, so that he and his host become frightened and surrender. The Bodhisattva tears asunder the net of evil, destroys wrong views, removes afflictions, flushes the gutters of desire, protects the Dharma castle, opens the Dharma gate, washes off the grime of the passions, and reveals the pure white Dharma. He unifies everything in the Buddha-Dharma and thus proclaims the right teaching.

He enters the town to beg alms; he accepts even rich food to enable the donors to accumulate merit and also to show that he is a field of virtue. Wishing to expound the Dharma, he smiles and so cures the three pains with various Dharma medicines. He teaches that the aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) has immeasurable merit, and by giving predictions to bodhisattvas, he enables them to attain buddhahood.

He demonstrates that he passes into nirvana but endlessly brings sentient beings to liberation. In removing their defilements, planting various roots of virtue, and attaining excellent merit, he displays wonderful and inconceivable works.

Furthermore, each of the bodhisattvas in the assembly is able to visit various buddha lands and expound teachings of the Way. His manner of practice is pure and undefiled. Just as a magician with his perfect skill can create at will various illusions, including images of a man or a woman, so the bodhisattva, having thoroughly learned all the methods of liberation and attained serene awareness of reality, can freely teach and transform beings. He manifests himself everywhere in innumerable buddha lands, performing acts of compassion for sentient beings tirelessly and with diligence. He has thus obtained complete mastery of all such methods of liberation. 266b

He is thoroughly conversant with the essentials of the sutras for bodhisattvas; and, as his fame spreads everywhere, he guides sentient beings throughout the ten directions. All buddhas remember him and give him their protection. He has already dwelled in all the Buddha's abodes and performed all the deeds of the Great Sage. He proclaims the Tathāgata's teachings, acts as a great master for other bodhisattvas, and, with profound *samādhi* and wisdom, guides multitudes of beings. With penetrating insight into the essential nature of *dharma*s, he discerns different aspects of living beings and closely watches over all the worlds. In making offerings to the buddhas, he manifests transformed bodies like flashes of lightning. Having well learned

the extensive wisdom of fearlessness in preaching and having realized the illusory nature of *dharma*s, he destroys Māra's nets and unties all the bonds of passion. He rises above the stages of *śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s and attains the *samādhi*s of emptiness, non-form, and non-desire. He skillfully provides expedient means and thus reveals three distinct teachings. Then for those of the middle and lower stages, he demonstrates his passing into nirvana. But, in reality, he is non-active and non-acquisitive, and, being aware that *dharma*s in themselves neither arise nor perish, he realizes that they are of absolute equality. He has attained innumerable *dhāraṇī*s, a hundred thousand *samādhi*s, and various kinds of spiritual faculties and wisdom.

With the meditation of vast and universal tranquility, he enters deeply into the Dharma treasury for bodhisattvas. After attaining the buddha-garland *samādhi,* he proclaims and expounds all the sutras. While dwelling deep in meditation, he visualizes all the innumerable buddhas and in an instant visits every one of them.

By elucidating and teaching the ultimate truth to sentient beings, he delivers them from the state of extreme pain, from the conditions in which suffering is so great as to prevent people from finding time for Buddhist practices, and also from the conditions in which suffering is not so great as to prevent them from doing so. Having attained the Tathāgata's thorough knowledge and eloquence, he has fluent command of languages, with which he enlightens all beings. He is above all worldly affairs and his mind, always serene, dwells on the path of liberation; this gives him complete control over all *dharma*s. Without being asked to do so, he becomes a good friend to each of the multitude of beings and carries their heavy karmic burdens on his back. He upholds the Tathāgata's profound Dharma treasury and protects the seeds of buddhahood, so that they may continue to multiply. Having awakened great compassion for sentient beings, he kindly expounds the teaching and endows them with the Dharma eye. He blocks the paths to the three evil realms, opens the gate of virtue, and, without waiting for their request, provides beings with the Dharma. He does this for the multitude of beings just as a dutiful son loves and respects his parents. He indeed looks upon sentient beings as his own self.

With such roots of virtue, all the bodhisattvas in the assembly had reached the shore of liberation. They had acquired the buddhas' immeasurable merit

and attained the sacred, pure, and inconceivable wisdom. Incalculable bodhisattvas and *mahāsattva*s, such as these, assembled there all at once.

3 At that time all the senses of the World-honored One radiated joy, his entire body appeared serene and glorious, and his august countenance looked most majestic. Having perceived the Buddha's holy intention, Venerable Ānanda rose from his seat, bared his right shoulder, prostrated himself, and joining his palms in reverence, said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, today all your senses are radiant with joy, your body is serene and glorious, and your august 266c
countenance is as majestic as a clear mirror whose brightness radiates outward and inward. The magnificence of your dignified appearance is unsurpassed and beyond measure. I have never seen you look so superb and majestic as today. With respect, Great Sage, this thought has occurred to me: 'Today, the World-honored One dwells in the rare and marvelous Dharma; today, the World Hero dwells in the Buddha's abode; today, the World Eye concentrates on the performance of the leader's duty; today, the World Valiant One dwells in the supreme *bodhi;* today, the One Most Honored in Heaven realizes the Tathāgata's virtue. The buddhas of the past, present, and future contemplate each other. How can this present buddha not contemplate the other buddhas?' For what reason does his countenance look so majestic and brilliant?"

Then the World-honored One said to Ānanda, "Tell me, Ānanda, whether some god urged you to put this question to the Buddha or whether you asked about his glorious countenance from your own wise observation."

Ānanda replied to the Buddha, "No god came to prompt me. I asked you about this matter of my own accord."

The Buddha said, "Well said, Ānanda. I am very pleased with your question. You have shown profound wisdom and subtle insight in asking me this wise question out of compassion for sentient beings. As the Tathāgata, I regard beings of the three worlds with boundless great compassion. The reason for my appearance in the world is to reveal teachings of the Way and save multitudes of beings by endowing them with true benefits. Even in countless millions of *kalpa*s it is difficult to come upon and meet a tathāgata. It is as difficult as seeing an *uḍumbara* flower, which blooms very rarely. Your question is of great benefit and will enlighten all heavenly and human beings. Ānanda, you should realize that the Tathāgata's perfectly

enlightened wisdom is unfathomable, capable of leading innumerable beings to liberation, and that his penetrating insight cannot be obstructed. With just one meal, he is able to live for a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s, or an incalculable and immeasurable length of time, or beyond. Even after that lapse of time, his senses will still be radiant with joy and show no signs of deterioration; his appearance will not change and his august countenance will look just the same. The reason for this is that the Tathāgata's meditation and wisdom are perfect and boundless and he has attained unrestricted power over all *dharma*s. Ānanda, listen carefully. I shall now expound the Dharma."

Ānanda replied, "Yes, I will. With joy in my heart, I wish to hear the Dharma."

4 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "In the distant past—innumerable, incalculable, and inconceivable *kalpa*s ago—a tathāgata named Dīpaṅkara appeared in the world. Having taught and freed innumerable beings and led them all along the Way of enlightenment, he passed into nirvana. Next appeared a tathāgata named Far-reaching Illumination. After him came Moonlight, and then Sandalwood Incense, King of Beautiful Mountains, Crown of Mount Sumeru, Brilliant like Mount Sumeru, Color of the Moon, Right Recollection, Free of Defilement, Nonattachment, Dragon Deva, Nocturnal Light, Peaceful and Brilliant Peak, Immovable Ground, Exquisite Beryl Flower,
267a Golden Beryl Luster, Gold Treasury, Flaming Light, Fiery Origin, Earth Shaking, Image of the Moon, Sound of the Sun, Flower of Freedom, Glorious Light, Miraculous Power of the Ocean of Enlightenment, Water Light, Great Fragrance, Free of Dust and Defilement, Abandoning Enmity, Flame of Jewels, Beautiful Peak, Heroic Stance, Merit-possessing Wisdom, Outshining the Sun and Moon, Beryl Light of the Sun and Moon, Supreme Beryl Light, Highest Peak, Flower of Enlightenment, Brightness of the Moon, Sunlight, King of the Colors of Flowers, Moonlight on the Water, Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance, Practice of Removing Hindrances, Pure Faith, Storehouse of Good, Majestic Glory, Wisdom of the Dharma, Voice of the Phoenix, Roar of the Lion, Cry of the Dragon, and Dwelling in the World. All these buddhas have already passed into nirvana.

5 "Then there appeared a buddha named Lokeśvararāja, the Tathāgata, Arhat, Fully Enlightened One, Possessed of Wisdom and Practice, Well-gone One,

Knower of the World, Unsurpassed One, Tamer of Beings, Teacher of Gods and Humans, and Enlightened and World-honored One.

"At that time there was a king who, having heard the Buddha's exposition of the Dharma, rejoiced in his heart and awakened aspiration for highest, perfect enlightenment. He renounced his kingdom and throne, and became a monk named Dharmākara. Having superior intelligence, courage, and wisdom, he distinguished himself in the world. He went to see Tathāgata Lokeśvararāja, knelt down at his feet, walked around him three times keeping him always on his right, prostrated himself on the ground, and, putting his palms together in worship, praised the Buddha with these verses:

1. The shining face of the Buddha is glorious;
Boundless is his magnificence.
Radiant splendor such as his
Is beyond all comparison.
The sun, the moon, and the *maṇi*-gem,
Though shining with dazzling brightness,
Are completely dimmed and obscured
As if they were a pile of inksticks.

2. The countenance of the Tathāgata
Is beyond compare in the whole world.
The great voice of the Enlightened One
Resounds throughout the ten directions.
His morality, learning, endeavor,
Absorption in meditation, wisdom,
And magnificent virtues have no equal;
They are wonderful and unsurpassed.

3. He meditates deeply and directly
On the oceanic Dharma of all buddhas.
He knows its depth and breadth
And penetrates to its farthest end.
Ignorance, greed, and anger
Are forever absent in the World-honored One.
He is the lion, the most valiant of all men;
His glorious virtue is unlimited.

4. His meritorious achievements are vast;
His wisdom is deep and sublime.
His light, with awe-inspiring glory,
267b Shakes the universe of a thousand million worlds.
I resolve to become a buddha,
Equal in attainment to you, O Holy King of the Dharma,
To save living beings from birth and death,
And to lead them all to liberation.

5. My discipline in giving (*dāna*), mind-control,
Moral virtues (*śīla*), patience (*kṣānti)*, and effort (*vīrya*),
And also[1] in meditation (*dhyāna*) and wisdom (*prajñā*),
Will be supreme and unsurpassed.
I vow that, when I have become a buddha,
I shall carry out this promise everywhere;
And to all fear-ridden beings
Shall I give great peace.

6. Even though there are buddhas[2]
A thousand million *koṭi*s in number,
And multitudes of great sages
Countless as the sands of the Ganges River,
I shall make offerings
To all those buddhas.
I shall seek the supreme Way
Resolutely and tirelessly.

7. Even though the buddha lands are as incalculable
As the sands of the Ganges River,
And other regions and worlds
Are also without number,
My light shall reach everywhere,
Pervading all those lands.
Such being the result of my efforts,
My glorious power will be immeasurable.

8. When I have become a buddha,
My land shall be most exquisite

And its people wonderful and unexcelled;
The seat of enlightenment will be supreme.
My land, being like nirvana itself,
Will be beyond comparison.
I take pity on living beings
And resolve to save them all.

9. Those who come from the ten directions
Will find joy and serenity of heart;
When they reach my land,
They shall dwell in peace and happiness.
I beg you, the Buddha, to become my witness
And to vouch for the truth of my aspiration.
Having now made my vows to you,
I will strive to fulfill them.

10. The World-honored Ones in the ten directions
Have unhindered wisdom;
I call upon those Revered Ones
To bear witness to my intention.
Even though I must remain
In a state of extreme pain,
I will diligently practice,
Enduring all hardships with tireless vigor."

6 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Having spoken these verses, Bhikṣu Dharmākara said to Buddha Lokeśvararāja, 'Respectfully, World-honored One, I announce that I have awakened aspiration for highest, perfect enlightenment. I beseech you to explain the Dharma to me fully, so that I can perform practices for the establishment of a pure buddha land adorned with innumerable excellent qualities. So please teach me how to attain enlightenment quickly and to remove the roots of the afflictions of birth and death of all.'"

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "At that time Buddha Lokeśvararāja replied to Bhikṣu Dharmākara, 'You yourself should know by what practice you can establish a glorious buddha land.' The *bhikṣu* said to the Buddha, 'That is far too vast and deep for my comprehension. I sincerely beseech you, World-honored One, to explain in detail the practices by which buddha tathāgatas

established their pure lands. After I hear that, I wish to practice as instructed and so fulfill my aspirations.'

"At that time Buddha Lokeśvararāja recognized Bhikṣu Dharmākara's noble and high aspirations and taught him as follows: 'If, for example, one keeps on bailing water out of a great ocean with a pint measure,[3] one will be
267c able to reach the bottom after many *kalpa*s and then obtain rare treasures. Likewise, if one sincerely, diligently, and unceasingly seeks the Way, one will be able to reach one's destination. What vow is there that cannot be fulfilled?'

"Then Buddha Lokeśvararāja explained in detail the greater and lesser aspects of two hundred and ten *koṭi*s of buddha lands, together with the good and evil natures of heavenly and human beings living there. He revealed them all to the *bhikṣu* just as he had requested. Then the *bhikṣu,* having heard the Buddha's exposition of the glorious pure lands and also having seen all of them, resolved upon his supreme, unsurpassed vows. His mind being serene and his aspirations free of attachment, he was unexcelled throughout the world. For five full *kalpa*s he contemplated the vows and then chose the pure practices for the establishment of his buddha land."

Ānanda asked the Buddha, "How long was the lifespan of beings in the land of Buddha Lokeśvararāja?"[4]

The Buddha replied, "The length of life of that buddha was forty-two *kalpa*s."

He continued, "After that, Dharmākara Bodhisattva adopted the pure practices that had led to the establishment of the excellent lands of two hundred and ten *koṭi*s of buddhas. When he had finished this task, he went to the Buddha, knelt down at his feet, walked around him three times, joined his palms in worship, and sat down. He then said to the Buddha, 'I have adopted the pure practices for the establishment of a glorious buddha land.' The Buddha said to him, 'You should proclaim this. Know that now is the right time. Encourage and delight the entire assembly. Hearing this, other bodhisattvas will practice this Dharma and so fulfill their innumerable great vows.' The *bhikṣu* replied, 'I beg you to grant me your attention. Now I will fully proclaim my vows.'

7 1. If, when I attain buddhahood, there should be in my land a hell, a realm of hungry ghosts, or a realm of animals, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

2. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should after death fall again into the three evil realms, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

3. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not all be the color of pure gold, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

4. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not all be of one appearance, and should there be any difference in their beauty, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

5. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not remember all their former lives, not knowing[5] at least the events that occurred during the previous hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of *kalpa*s, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

6. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not possess the divine eye of seeing at least a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of buddha lands, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

7. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should
not possess the divine ear of hearing the teachings of at least a hundred thou- 268a
sand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of buddhas and should not remember all of them, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

8. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not possess the faculty of knowing the thoughts of others, at least those of all sentient beings living in a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of buddha lands, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

9. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not possess the supernatural power of traveling anywhere in one instant, even beyond a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of buddha lands, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

10. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should give rise to thoughts of self-attachment, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

11. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not dwell in the definitely assured stage and unfailingly reach nirvana, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

12. If, when I attain buddhahood, my light should be limited, illuminating even a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of buddha lands, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

13. If, when I attain buddhahood, my lifespan should be limited, even to the extent of a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of *kalpa*s, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

14. If, when I attain buddhahood, the number of the *śrāvaka*s in my land could be known, even if all the beings and *pratyekabuddha*s living in this universe of a thousand million worlds should count them during a hundred thousand *kalpa*s, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

15. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should have limited lifespans, except when they wish to shorten them in accordance with their original vows, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

16. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should even hear of any wrongdoing, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

17. If, when I attain buddhahood, innumerable buddhas in the lands of the ten directions should not all praise and glorify my Name, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

18. If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten directions who sincerely and joyfully entrust themselves to me, desire to be born in my land, and think of me even ten times[6] should not be born there, may I not attain perfect enlightenment. Excluded, however, are those who commit the five grave offenses and abuse the Right Dharma.

19. If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten directions who awaken aspiration for enlightenment, do various meritorious
268b deeds, and sincerely desire to be born in my land, should not, at their death, see me appear before them surrounded by a multitude of sages, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

20. If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten directions who, having heard my Name, concentrate their thoughts on my land, plant roots of virtue, and sincerely transfer their merits toward my land with a desire to be born there should not eventually fulfill their aspiration, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

21. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not all be endowed with the thirty-two physical characteristics of a great being, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

22. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the buddha lands of the other directions who visit my land should not ultimately and unfailingly

reach the stage of becoming a buddha after one more life, may I not attain perfect enlightenment. Excepted are those who wish to teach and guide sentient beings in accordance with their original vows. For they will wear the armor of great vows, accumulate merit, deliver all beings from birth and death, visit buddha lands to perform the bodhisattva practices, make offerings to buddha tathāgatas throughout the ten directions, enlighten countless sentient beings as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, and establish them in highest, perfect enlightenment. Such bodhisattvas transcend the course of practice of ordinary bodhisattvas, manifest the practices of all the bodhisattva stages, and cultivate the virtues of Samantabhadra.

23. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land who would make offerings to buddhas through my divine power should not be able to reach immeasurable and innumerable *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of buddha lands in as short a time as it takes to eat a meal, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

24. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land should not be able, as they wish, to perform meritorious acts of worshiping the buddhas with the offerings of their choice, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

25. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land should not be able to expound the Dharma with all-knowing wisdom, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

26. If, when I attain buddhahood, there should be any bodhisattva in my land not endowed with the body of the Vajra god Nārāyaṇa, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

27. If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings should be able, even with the divine eye, to distinguish by name and calculate by number all the myriads of manifestations provided for the humans and *deva*s in my land, which will be glorious and resplendent and have exquisite details beyond description, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

28. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land, even those
with little store of merit, should not be able to see the *bodhi* tree, which has 268c
immeasurable light in countless colors and is four million *li* in height, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

29. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land should not acquire eloquence and wisdom in upholding sutras and reciting and expounding them, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

30. If, when I attain buddhahood, the wisdom and eloquence of bodhisattvas in my land should be limited, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

31. If, when I attain buddhahood, my land should not be resplendent, revealing in its light all the immeasurable, innumerable, and inconceivable buddha lands like images reflected in a clear mirror, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

32. If, when I attain buddhahood, all the myriads of manifestations in my land, from the ground to the sky, such as palaces, pavilions, ponds, streams, and trees, should not be composed both of countless treasures that surpass in supreme excellence anything in the worlds of humans and *deva*s and of a hundred thousand kinds of aromatic wood whose fragrance pervades all the worlds of the ten directions, causing all bodhisattvas who sense it to perform Buddhist practices, then may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

33. If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings in the immeasurable and inconceivable buddha lands of the ten directions who have been touched by my light should not feel peace and happiness in their bodies and minds surpassing those of humans and *deva*s, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

34. If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings in the immeasurable and inconceivable buddha lands of the ten directions who have heard my Name should not gain the bodhisattva's insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s and should not acquire various profound *dhāraṇī*s, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

35. If, when I attain buddhahood, women in the immeasurable and inconceivable buddha lands of the ten directions who, having heard my Name, rejoice in faith, awaken aspiration for enlightenment, and wish to renounce womanhood should after death be reborn again as women, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

36. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the immeasurable and inconceivable buddha lands of the ten directions who have heard my Name should not, after the end of their lives, always perform sacred practices until they reach buddhahood, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

37. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in the immeasurable and inconceivable buddha lands of the ten directions who, having heard
269a my Name, prostrate themselves on the ground to revere and worship me,

rejoice in faith, and perform the bodhisattva practices should not be respected by all *deva*s and people of the world, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

38. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not obtain clothing as soon as such a desire arises in their minds, and if fine robes as prescribed and praised by the buddhas should not be spontaneously provided for them to wear, and if these clothes should need sewing, bleaching, dyeing, or washing, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

39. If, when I attain buddhahood, humans and *deva*s in my land should not enjoy happiness and pleasure comparable to those of a monk who has exhausted all the passions, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

40. If, when I attain buddhahood, the bodhisattvas in my land who wish to see the immeasurable glorious buddha lands of the ten directions should not be able to view all of them reflected in the jeweled trees, just as one sees one's face reflected in a clear mirror, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

41. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should, at any time before becoming buddhas, have impaired, inferior, or incomplete sense organs, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

42. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should not all attain the *samādhi* called "pure liberation" and, while dwelling therein, should not, without losing concentration, be able to make offerings in one instant to immeasurable and inconceivable buddhas, World-honored Ones, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

43. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should not be reborn into noble families after death, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

44. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should not rejoice so greatly as to dance and perform the bodhisattva practices and should not acquire stores of merit, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

45. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should not all attain the *samādhi* called "universal equality" and, while dwelling therein, should not always be able to see the immeasurable and inconceivable[7] tathāgatas until those bodhisattvas, too, become buddhas, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

46. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land should not be able to hear spontaneously whatever teachings they may wish, may I not
269b attain perfect enlightenment.

47. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should not instantly reach the stage of non-retrogression, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.

48. If, when I attain buddhahood, bodhisattvas in the lands of the other directions who hear my Name should not instantly gain the first, second, and third insights into the nature of *dharma*s and firmly abide in the truths realized by all the buddhas, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.'"

8 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Bhikṣu Dharmākara, having thus proclaimed those vows, spoke the following verses:

1. I have made vows, unrivaled in all the world;
I shall certainly reach the unsurpassed Way.
If these vows should not be fulfilled,
May I not attain perfect enlightenment.

2. If I should not become a great benefactor
In lives to come for immeasurable *kalpa*s
To save the poor and the afflicted everywhere,
May I not attain perfect enlightenment.

3. When I attain buddhahood,
My Name will be heard throughout the ten directions;
Should there be any place where it is not heard,
May I not attain perfect enlightenment.

4. Free of greed and with profound mindfulness
And pure wisdom, I will perform the sacred practices;
I will seek to attain the unsurpassed Way
And become the teacher of *deva*s and humans.

5. With my divine power I will display great light,
Illuminating the worlds without limit,
And dispel the darkness of the three defilements;
Thus I will deliver all beings from misery.

6. Having obtained the eye of wisdom,
I will remove the darkness of ignorance;
I will block all evil paths
And open the gate to the good realms.

7. When merits and virtues are perfected,
My majestic light will radiate in the ten directions,
Outshining the sun and moon
And surpassing the brilliance of the heavens.

8. I will open the Dharma storehouse for the multitudes
And endow them all with treasures of merit.
Being always among the multitudes,
I will proclaim the Dharma with the lion's roar.

9. I will make offerings to all the buddhas,
Thereby acquiring roots of virtue.
When my vows are fulfilled and wisdom perfected,
I shall be the sovereign of the three worlds.

10. Like your unhindered wisdom, O Buddha,
Mine shall reach everywhere, illuminating all;
May my supreme wisdom
Be like yours, Most Honored One.

11. If these vows are to be fulfilled,
Let this universe of a thousand million worlds quake in response
And let all the *deva*s in heaven 269c
Rain down rare and marvelous flowers.'"

9 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "As soon as Bhikṣu Dharmākara spoke those verses, the entire earth quaked in six ways and a rain of wonderful flowers fell from heaven, scattering everywhere. Spontaneous music was heard and a voice in the sky said, 'Surely you will attain highest, perfect enlightenment.'

"Then Bhikṣu Dharmākara kept all those great vows, which were true, unfailing, and unsurpassed in the whole world, and intensely aspired to attain nirvana.

"Then, Ānanda, after proclaiming and establishing those universal vows in the presence of Buddha Lokeśvararāja before the multitude of beings,

including the eight kinds of superhuman beings, such as *deva*s and dragon spirits, and also Māra and Brahmā, Bhikṣu Dharmākara was solely intent on producing a glorious and exquisite land. The buddha land that he sought to establish was vast in extent, unsurpassed, and supremely wonderful, always present and subject neither to decay nor change. During inconceivable and innumerable *kalpa*s, he cultivated the immeasurable meritorious practices of the bodhisattva path.

"He did not harbor any thought of greed, hatred, or cruelty; nor did he allow any ideas of greed, hatred, or cruelty to arise. He was unattached to any form, sound, smell, taste, touch, or idea. Possessed of the power to persevere, he did not avoid undergoing various afflictions. Having little desire for his own sake, he knew contentment. Without any impure thought, enmity, or stupidity, he dwelled continually in tranquil *samādhi.* His wisdom was unobstructible and his mind free of falsehood and deceitfulness. With expressions of tenderness on his face and with kindness in his speech, he spoke to others in consonance with their inner thoughts. Courageous and diligent, strong willed and untiring, he devoted himself solely to the pursuit of the pure Dharma, thereby benefiting a multitude of beings. He revered the Three Treasures, respected his teachers and elders, and thus adorned his practices with a great store of merit. By so doing, he enabled sentient beings to partake of them.

"He dwelled in the realization that all *dharma*s are empty, devoid of distinctive features, and not to be sought after, and that they neither act nor arise; he thus realized that all *dharma*s are like magical creations. He avoided all wrong speech that would bring harm upon himself or others or both; he engaged in right speech that would bring benefit to himself or others or both. He abandoned his kingdom and renounced the throne, leaving behind wealth and sensuous pleasures. Practicing the six *pāramitā*s himself, he taught others to do the same. During innumerable *kalpa*s, he accumulated merit and amassed virtues.

"Wherever he was born, an immeasurable store of treasure spontaneously appeared as he wished. He taught countless sentient beings and guided them on the path of highest, true enlightenment. He was reborn as a rich man, a lay devotee, a member of the highest caste or of noble family (brahman), a *kṣatriya* king, a wheel-turning monarch (*cakravartin*), a king of one of the

six heavens in the world of desire, or even higher, as a Brahmā king. He revered and worshiped all buddhas by making the four kinds of offerings to them. The merit he thus acquired was indescribably great. Fragrance issued from his mouth as from a blue lotus flower, and every pore of his body emitted the scent of sandalwood, which permeated innumerable worlds. His appearance was majestic and his physical characteristics and marks were truly wonderful. From his hands inexhaustible treasures, clothes, food and drink, rare and exquisite flowers and incense, silken canopies,[8] banners, and other orna- 270a
ments were produced. In such manifestations he was unrivaled among all heavenly and human beings. He thus attained command of all *dharma*s."

10 Ānanda asked the Buddha, "Has Bodhisattva Dharmākara already attained buddhahood and then passed into nirvana? Or has he not yet attained buddhahood? Or is he dwelling somewhere at present?"

The Buddha replied to Ānanda, "Bodhisattva Dharmākara has already attained buddhahood and is now dwelling in a western buddha land called 'Peace and Bliss,' a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of lands away from here."

Ānanda further asked the Buddha, "How much time has passed since he attained buddhahood?"

The Buddha replied, "Since he attained buddhahood about ten *kalpa*s have passed."

He continued, "In that buddha land, the earth is composed of seven kinds of jewels—namely, gold, silver, beryl, coral, amber, agate, and ruby—that have spontaneously appeared. The land itself is so vast, spreading boundlessly to the farthest extent, that it is impossible to know its limit. All the rays of light from those jewels intermingle and create manifold reflections, producing a dazzling illumination. Those pure, superb, and exquisite adornments are unsurpassed in all the worlds of the ten directions. They are the finest of all gems and are like those of the sixth heaven. In that land, there are no mountains, such as Mount Sumeru and the Encircling Adamantine Mountains. Likewise, there are neither oceans nor seas and neither valleys nor gorges. But one can see those manifestations by the Buddha's power if one so wishes. In that land there is no hell; neither are there realms of hungry ghosts or animals nor other adverse conditions. Neither do the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter exist. It is always moderate and pleasant, never cold or hot."

Then Ānanda asked the Buddha, "If, World-honored One, there is no Mount Sumeru in that land, what sustains the Heaven of the Four Kings and the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods?"

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "What sustains Yāma, which is the third heaven of the world of desire, and other heavens up to the highest heaven of the world of form?"

Ānanda answered, "The consequences of karma are inconceivable."

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Inconceivable indeed are the consequences of karma, and so are the worlds of the buddhas. By the power of meritorious deeds, sentient beings in that land dwell on the ground of karmic reward. That is why those heavens exist without Mount Sumeru."

Ānanda continued, "I do not doubt this myself but have asked about it simply because I wished to remove such doubts for the benefit of sentient beings in the future."

11 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The majestic light of Buddha Amitāyus is the most exalted. No other buddha's light can match his. The light of some buddhas illuminates a hundred buddha lands, and that of others a thousand buddha lands. Briefly, that of Amitāyus illuminates the eastern buddha lands as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River. In the same way, it illuminates the buddha lands in the south, west, and north, in each of the four intermediate directions, and above and below. Further, the light of some buddhas extends seven feet; that of others, one *yojana,* or two, three, four, or five *yojana*s; and the distance covered increases in this way until the light of some buddhas illuminates one buddha land.

"For this reason, Amitāyus is called by the following names: the Buddha of Infinite Light, the Buddha of Boundless Light, the Buddha of Unhindered
270b Light, the Buddha of Incomparable Light, the Buddha of the Light of the King of Flame, the Buddha of Pure Light, the Buddha of the Light of Joy, the Buddha of the Light of Wisdom, the Buddha of Unceasing Light, the Buddha of Inconceivable Light, the Buddha of Ineffable Light, and the Buddha of the Light Outshining the Sun and Moon.

"If sentient beings encounter his light, their three defilements are removed; they feel tenderness, joy, and pleasure; and good thoughts arise. If sentient beings in the three realms of suffering see his light they will all be relieved and freed from affliction. At the end of their lives they all reach liberation.

"The light of Amitāyus shines brilliantly, illuminating all the buddha lands of the ten directions. There is no place where it is not perceived. I am not the only one who now praises his light. All the buddhas, *śrāvaka*s, *pratyekabuddha*s, and bodhisattvas praise and glorify it in the same way. If sentient beings, having heard of the majestic virtue of his light, glorify it continually, day and night, with sincerity of heart, they will be able to attain birth in his land as they wish. Then the multitudes of bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s will praise their excellent virtue. Later, when they attain buddhahood, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas in the ten directions will praise their light, just as I now praise the light of Amitāyus."

The Buddha continued, "The majestic glory of the light of Amitāyus could not be exhaustively described even if I praised it continually, day and night, for a period of one *kalpa*."

12 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The lifespan of Amitāyus is so long that it is impossible for anyone to calculate it. To give an illustration, let us suppose that all the innumerable sentient beings in the worlds of the ten directions were reborn in human form and that every one became a *śrāvaka* or *pratyekabuddha*. Even if they assembled in one place, concentrated their thoughts, and exercised the power of their wisdom to the utmost to reckon the length of the Buddha's lifespan by the number of *kalpa*s, even after a thousand million *kalpas* they could still not reach its limit. So it is with the lifespan of *śrāvaka*s, bodhisattvas, heavenly beings, and human beings in his land. Similarly, it is not to be encompassed by any means of reckoning or by any metaphorical expression. Again, the number of *śrāvaka*s and bodhisattvas living there is incalculable. They are fully endowed with transcendent wisdom and free in their exercise of majestic power; they could hold the entire world in their hands."

13 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The number of *śrāvaka*s at the first teaching assembly of that buddha was incalculable; so was the number of bodhisattvas. Even if an immeasurable and countless number of humans multiplied by millions of *koṭi*s should all become like Mahāmaudgalyāyana and together reckon their number during innumerable *nayuta*s of *kalpa*s, or even until they attain nirvana, they still could not know that number. Let us suppose that there is a great ocean, infinitely deep and wide, and that one takes

270c a drop of water out of it with a one-hundredth part of a split hair. How would you compare that drop of water with the rest of the ocean?"

Ānanda replied, "When the drop of water is compared with the great ocean, it is impossible even for one skilled in astronomy or mathematics to know the proportion, or for anyone to describe it by any rhetorical or metaphorical expression."

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Even if people like Mahāmaudgalyāyana were to count for millions of *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s, the number of the *śrāvaka*s and bodhisattvas at the first teaching assembly who could be counted would be like a drop of water, and the number of sages yet to be counted would be like the rest of the ocean.

14 "Again, seven-jeweled trees completely fill that land. There are some made of gold, some of silver, and others made of beryl, crystal, coral, ruby, or agate. There are also trees made of two to seven kinds of jewels.

"There are gold trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits of silver; silver trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits of gold; beryl trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits of crystal; crystal trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits of beryl; coral trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits of ruby; ruby trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits of beryl; agate trees with leaves, flowers, and fruits made of various jewels.

"Again, there are jeweled trees with purple-gold roots, white-silver trunks, beryl branches, crystal twigs, coral leaves, ruby flowers, and agate fruits. There are jeweled trees with white-silver roots, beryl trunks, crystal branches, coral twigs, ruby leaves, agate flowers, and purple-gold fruits. There are jeweled trees with beryl roots, crystal trunks, coral branches, ruby twigs, agate leaves, purple-gold flowers, and white-silver fruits. There are jeweled trees with crystal roots, coral trunks, ruby branches, agate twigs, purple-gold leaves, white-silver flowers, and beryl fruits. There are jeweled trees with coral roots, ruby trunks, agate branches, purple-gold twigs, white-silver leaves, beryl flowers, and crystal fruits. There are jeweled trees with ruby roots, agate trunks, purple-gold branches, white-silver twigs, beryl leaves, crystal flowers, and coral fruits. There are jeweled trees with agate roots, purple-gold trunks, white-silver branches, beryl twigs, crystal leaves, coral flowers, and ruby fruits.

"These jeweled trees are in parallel rows, their trunks are evenly spaced, their branches are in level layers, their leaves are symmetrical, their flowers harmonize, and their fruits are well arranged. The brilliant colors of these trees are so luxuriant that it is impossible to see them all. When a fresh breeze 271a
wafts through them, exquisite sounds of the pentatonic scales, such as *gong* and *shang,* spontaneously arise and make symphonic music.

15 "Again, the *bodhi* tree of Buddha Amitāyus is four million *li* in height and five thousand *yojana*s in circumference at its base. Its branches spread two hundred thousand *li* in each of the four directions. It is a natural cluster of all kinds of precious stones and is adorned with the kings of jewels, namely, moonbright *maṇi*-gems and ocean-supporting wheel gems. Everywhere between its twigs hang jeweled ornaments with a thousand million different colors intermingling in various ways, and their innumerable beams shine with the utmost brilliance. The *bodhi* tree itself is covered with nets of rare, excellent gems, and on it appear all kinds of ornaments in accordance with one's wishes.

"When a gentle breeze wafts through its branches and leaves, innumerable exquisite Dharma sounds arise, which spread far and wide, pervading all the other buddha lands in the ten directions. Those who hear the sounds attain penetrating insight into *dharma*s and dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. Until they attain buddhahood, their senses of hearing will remain clear and sharp[9] and they will not suffer from any pain or sickness. Whether they hear the sounds of the *bodhi* tree, see its colors, smell its perfume, taste its flavors, perceive its lights, or conceive of the Dharma in their minds, they all attain profoundly penetrating insight into *dharma*s and dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. Until they attain buddhahood, their six sense organs will remain sharp and clear and they will not suffer from any pain or sickness.

"Ānanda, when humans and *deva*s of that land see the *bodhi* tree, they will attain three insights: first, insight into reality through hearing the sacred sounds; second, insight into reality by being in accord with it; and third, insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s. These benefits are all bestowed by the majestic power of Amitāyus, the power of his Original Vow, his perfectly fulfilled vow, his clear and manifest vow, his firm vow, and his accomplished vow."

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "A king of this world possesses a hundred thousand kinds of music. From the realm ruled by a wheel-turning monarch up to the sixth heaven [of the world of desire], the sounds of the music produced in each higher realm are ten million *koṭi*s of times superior to those of a lower one. The thousands of varieties of musical sound produced in the sixth heaven are a thousand *koṭi*s of times inferior to one sound produced by the seven-jeweled trees in the land of Amitāyus. Again, in that land, there are thousands of varieties of spontaneous music, which are all, without exception, sounds of the Dharma. They are clear and serene, full of depth and resonance, delicate, and harmonious; they are the most excellent sounds in all the worlds of the ten directions.

16 "Again, the halls, monasteries, palaces, and pavilions are spontaneous apparitions, all adorned with the seven kinds of jewels and hung with curtains of various other jewels, such as pearls and moonbright *maṇi*-gems.

"Inside and out, to right and left, are bathing ponds. Some of them are ten *yojana*s in length, breadth, and depth; some are twenty *yojana*s; others, thirty; and so on, until we come to those measuring a hundred thousand *yojana*s in length, breadth, and depth. They are full to the brim with the water that possesses the eight excellent qualities, clear, fragrant, and tasting like nectar.

271b "There are golden ponds with beds of silver sand; silver ponds with beds of golden sand; crystal ponds with beds of beryl sand; beryl ponds with beds of crystal sand; coral ponds with beds of amber sand; amber ponds with beds of coral sand; agate ponds with beds of ruby sand; ruby ponds with beds of agate sand; white jade ponds with beds of purple-gold sand; purple-gold ponds with beds of white jade sand. Others are composed of two to seven jewels.

"On the banks of these ponds are sandalwood trees, whose flowers and leaves hang down and diffuse perfumes everywhere. Heavenly lotuses, blue, pink, yellow, and white, bloom profusely in various tints and tones, completely covering the surface of the water.

"If bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s in that land enter the jeweled ponds and wish the water to rise to their ankles, it rises to their ankles. If they wish it to rise to their knees, it rises to their knees. If they wish it to rise to their waists, it rises to their waists. If they wish it to rise to their necks, it rises to their necks. If they wish it to pour over their bodies, it spontaneously pours

over their bodies. If they wish it to recede, it recedes. Its temperature is moderate, cool, or warm according to their wishes. The water comforts the body and refreshes the mind, washing away their mental defilements. Clear and pure, the water is so transparent that it seems formless. The jewel sand shines so brightly that even the depth of the water cannot prevent its brilliance from being seen. The rippling water forms meandering streams, which join and flow into each other. Their movement is peaceful and quiet, neither too fast nor too slow, and their ripples spontaneously produce innumerable wonderful sounds. One can hear whatever sound one wishes. For example, some hear the sound 'Buddha,' some hear the sound 'Dharma,' some 'Sangha,' others hear 'tranquility,' 'emptiness and no-self,' 'great compassion,' *'pāramitā,'* 'ten powers,' 'fearlessness,' 'special qualities,' 'supernatural powers,' 'non-activity,' 'neither arising nor perishing,' 'insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s,' and so on until the various sounds of the wonderful Dharma, such as 'the sprinkling of nectar upon the head of a bodhisattva,' are reached. As one hears those sounds, one attains immeasurable joy and accords with the principles of purity, absence of desires, extinction, and reality. One is in harmony with the Three Treasures, the Buddha's powers, fearlessness, and special qualities, and also with supernatural powers and other methods of practice for bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s. Not even the names of the three realms of suffering are heard there, but only nirvanic sounds of bliss. For this reason, that land is called 'Peace and Bliss.'

17 "Ānanda, those born in that buddha land are endowed with such bodies of purity and provided with various exquisite sounds, supernatural powers, and virtues. The palaces in which they dwell; their clothing, food, and drink; the wonderful flowers; and the various kinds of incense and adornments are like those naturally provided in the sixth heaven of the world of desire.

"At mealtimes, plates made of the seven kinds of jewels—gold, silver,
beryl, agate, ruby, coral, and amber, and also of moonbright pearl—sponta- 271c
neously appear, filled with food and drink of a hundred tastes according to one's wishes. Although the food is offered no one actually eats it. Once it has been seen and smelled, one naturally feels that it has been eaten and so is satisfied; thus one feels relaxed in mind and body, free from attachment to the sense of taste. When the meal is over everything disappears, but it reappears at the next mealtime.

"That buddha land, like the realm of unconditioned nirvana, is pure and serene, resplendent and blissful. The *śrāvaka*s, bodhisattvas, heavenly beings, and humans there have lofty and brilliant wisdom and are masters of the supernatural powers. They are all of one form, without any differences, but are called 'heavenly beings' and 'humans' simply by analogy with states of existence in other worlds. They are of noble and majestic countenance, unequaled in all the worlds, and their appearance is superb, unmatched by any being, heavenly or human. They are all endowed with bodies of naturalness, emptiness, and infinity."

18 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "If a beggar in extreme poverty sits by the side of a king, how can their appearances be compared?"

Ānanda replied, "If such a man sits by the side of a king, his emaciated, mean, and ragged appearance cannot be compared with the king's. His appearance is a thousand million *koṭi*s or even incalculable times inferior to the king's. What is the reason for this? The conditions of a beggar in extreme poverty—being at the lowest social level, with barely enough clothes to cover his body, scarcely enough food to sustain his life, with hunger and cold always tormenting him, and having almost lost human contact—are all the result of his misdeeds in former lives. In the past he did not cultivate roots of virtue but instead accumulated riches without giving anything to others. He became more miserly as his wealth increased, desired to obtain more, insatiably hankered after further acquisitions, and gave no thought to good acts. Thus he piled up a mountain of evil karma. When his life ended all his wealth was gone, and what he had accumulated with great toil and worry was of no avail to him; all passed in vain into the possession of others. Having no store of merit on which to depend and no virtue on which to rely, after death he fell into one of the evil realms, where he suffered pain for a long period. When his karmic retributions ended, he was able to escape but was reborn into a lower class; being foolish, base, and inferior, he barely maintains the appearance of a human being.

"The king of a country is the most honored of all men. This is the reward for virtues accumulated in former lives, in which he, with a compassionate heart, gave generously to many, saved people from suffering through kindness and benevolence, performed good deeds with sincerity, and never disputed with others. When that life ended, he was rewarded with rebirth into

a higher state. Born in a heavenly realm, he enjoyed bliss and happiness. His accumulated virtues produced such a surplus of good that when he was reborn as a man in this life his birth was, deservedly, into a royal family. Since he is naturally noble, his dignified and majestic demeanor commands the respect of his people, and superb clothes and sumptuous food are prepared and served to him as he pleases. All this is a reward for virtues in his former lives."

19 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "What you say is true. Even though a king is the noblest of all men and has a regal countenance, if he is compared with a wheel-turning monarch he will appear as base and inferior as a beggar beside a king. Likewise, however excellent and unrivaled the majestic appearance of such a monarch may be, if he is compared with the lord of the Heaven 272a
of the Thirty-three Gods, he will also appear incomparably inferior, even ten thousand *koṭi*s of times more so. Again, if this heavenly lord is compared with the lord of the sixth heaven, he will appear a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of times inferior. If the lord of the sixth heaven is compared with a bodhisattva or a *śrāvaka* dwelling in the land of Amitāyus, his countenance and appearance will be far from equal to that of the bodhisattva or *śrāvaka,* being a thousand million *koṭi*s of times or even incalculable times inferior."

20 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "*Deva*s and humans in the land of Amitāyus are each provided with robes, food and drink, flowers, perfume, ornaments, silken canopies,[10] and banners, and are surrounded by exquisite sounds. Their abodes, palaces, and pavilions are exactly in accordance with the size of their bodies. One, two, or even innumerable jewels appear before them, as soon as they wish. In addition, beautiful jeweled fabric covers the ground where all the *deva*s and humans walk. In that buddha land there are innumerable jeweled nets, all adorned with skeins of gold thread, pearls, and a hundred thousand kinds of rare and marvelous treasures. All around the nets hang jeweled bells of the utmost beauty, which shine brilliantly. When a natural breeze of virtue arises and gently blows, it is moderate in temperature, neither cold nor hot, and refreshing and soft to the senses; it moves neither too slowly nor too quickly. When the breeze wafts over the nets and the various jeweled trees, countless excellent sounds of the Dharma are heard, and ten thousand kinds of delicate fragrances of virtue are diffused. If one smells those fragrances one's impurities and passions spontaneously cease to arise.

If touched by the breeze itself, one enjoys the same pleasure as a monk who has entered the *samādhi* of extinction.

21 "Again, as the breeze blows, flowers are scattered throughout the buddha land; they spontaneously divide into different colors, not mixed together. They are soft and pleasant to touch, glow brilliantly, and diffuse rich fragrances. When one's foot is placed on them they sink down four inches, but when the foot is lifted they rise to their former level. When the flowers have served their purpose the earth opens up and they vanish, leaving the ground clean and without trace of them. At the right moment, six times a day, the breeze wafts, scattering the flowers in this way. Moreover, lotus flowers of various jewels fill the land; each has a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of petals with lights of numerous colors—green lotuses glow with a green light; white ones with a white light; and likewise dark blue, yellow, red, and purple lotuses glow with lights of their respective colors. The brilliance of these lights is so magnificent that it outshines the sun and moon. Each flower emits thirty-six hundred thousand *koṭi*s of rays of light, each sending forth thirty-six hundred thousand *koṭi*s of buddhas. The bodies of these buddhas are purple-gold, and their physical characteristics and marks are superb beyond compare. Each buddha emits a hundred thousand rays of light and expounds the wonderful Dharma to beings in the ten directions, thus setting innumerable beings
272b on the right path of the Buddha.

End of Part One of the *Sutra on the Buddha of Infinite Life Delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha*

Part Two

22 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Sentient beings who are born in that buddha land all reside among those assured of nirvana. The reason is that in that land there are neither beings who are destined to adverse conditions nor those whose destinies are uncertain.

"All buddha tathāgatas in the ten directions, as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, together praise the inconceivable, supernal virtue of Amitāyus. All sentient beings who, having heard his Name, rejoice in faith, think of him even once, and sincerely transfer the merit of virtuous practices to that land,[11] aspiring to be born there, will attain birth and dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. But excluded are those who have committed the five grave offenses and abused the Right Dharma."

23 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "*Deva*s and humans in the worlds of the ten directions who sincerely aspire to be born in that land can be classified into three grades. The higher grade of aspirants are those who leave their homes and abandon worldly desires to become monks. Having awakened aspiration for enlightenment, they singlemindedly think of Amitāyus and perform meritorious practices, aspiring to be born in his land. When they are about to die, Amitāyus, together with a host of sages, will appear before them. Then they will follow him and attain birth in his land. At once they will be born by transformation spontaneously from within seven-jeweled lotus flowers. They will dwell in the stage of non-retrogression, attain steadfast wisdom, and be capable of freely exercising supernatural powers. For this reason, Ānanda, sentient beings who wish to see Amitāyus while in this world should awaken aspiration for highest enlightenment, perform meritorious deeds, and aspire to be born in his land."

24 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The middle grade of aspirants are the *deva*s and humans in the worlds of the ten directions who sincerely desire to be born in that land. Although unable to become monks and cultivate much merit, they awaken aspiration for the highest enlightenment, singlemindedly think of Amitāyus, perform some good deeds, observe the precepts of abstinence,

build stupas, donate Buddhist statues, give alms to mendicants, hang banners, light candles, scatter flowers, burn incense, and so forth. They transfer the merit of those practices to his land, aspiring to be born there. When they are
272c about to die, Amitāyus will manifest his transformed body, which is fully possessed of the same radiance and physical characteristics and marks as those of the real Buddha, and make it appear before them, together with a host of sages. Then they will follow this transformed buddha and be born in the Pure Land, where they will dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. Their virtue and wisdom will be next to those of the higher grade of aspirants."

25 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The lower grade of aspirants are the *deva*s and humans in the worlds of the ten directions who sincerely desire to be born in that land. Although unable to do many meritorious deeds, they awaken aspiration for highest enlightenment and singlemindedly think of Amitāyus even ten times, desiring birth in his land. When they hear the profound Dharma they joyfully accept it and do not entertain any doubt; and so, thinking of the Buddha even once, they sincerely aspire to be born in that land. When they are about to die they will see the Buddha in a dream. Those aspirants, too, will be born in the Pure Land. Their merit and wisdom will be next to those of the middle grade of aspirants."

26 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The majestic virtue of Amitāyus is boundless. All the innumerable, countless, and inconceivable buddha tathāgatas in the worlds of the ten directions praise him. Innumerable and countless bodhisattvas in the buddha lands of the eastern direction, as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, all without exception, visit Amitāyus in order to worship and make offerings to him and to the assembly of bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s. Having heard the teaching, they expound it to lead people into the path of the Buddha. As in the eastern direction, so it is in the southern, western, and northern, as well in the four intermediate directions and above and below."

27 Then the World-honored One spoke the following verses:

1. In the eastern direction there are buddha lands
   As numerous as the sands of the Ganges River;
   Bodhisattvas dwelling in those lands
   Go to pay homage to Amitāyus,[12] the Enlightened One.

2. So it is in the southern, western, and northern directions,
The intermediate directions, above, and below;
Bodhisattvas dwelling in those lands
Go to pay homage to Amitāyus, the Enlightened One.

3. All those bodhisattvas, taking with them
Exquisite heavenly flowers,
Precious incense, and priceless robes,
Make offerings to Amitāyus, the Enlightened One.

4. Playing heavenly music in concert,
Producing harmonious and delicate sounds,
They praise the Most Honored One with hymns saying:

5. "You have perfected supernatural powers and wisdom,
With which you freely enter the gates of the profound Dharma;
You also possess stores of merit and virtue
And unparalleled supreme knowledge.

6. "Illuminating the world with the sun of wisdom,
You disperse the clouds of birth and death."
Having reverently walked round him three times,
The bodhisattvas pay homage to the Unsurpassed One.

7. Having seen the glorious Pure Land,
Wonderfully resplendent,
They are led to awaken supernal aspiration[13] 273a
And wish their lands to be like his.

8. Then Amitāyus, the Enlightened One,
Changes his countenance and smiles;
From his mouth come forth innumerable rays of light,
Which illuminate the worlds of the ten directions.

9. These rays of light return, encircle his body
Three times, and enter the crown of his head.
All *deva*s and humans are delighted to see this
And are filled with great joy.

10. Avalokiteśvara, the Exalted Being, having respectfully arranged
His clothes and bowed his head,
Asked the Buddha, "Why are you smiling?
Reverently I inquire. Please tell me why."

11. The Buddha's majestic voice was like thunder,
Producing wonderful sounds in the eight qualities of voice:
"Because I am about to give predictions to the bodhisattvas.
I shall now explain to you. Listen carefully!

12. "I am fully aware of the vows of the bodhisattvas
Who come from ten directions;
They seek to glorify their pure lands.
After receiving my predictions, they will become buddhas.

13. "While realizing that all *dharma*s are like a dream,
An illusion, or an echo,
They will fulfill their excellent vows
And surely establish pure lands such as this.

14. "Knowing that *dharma*s are like a flash of lightning or a shadow,
They will pursue the bodhisattva path to its end
And amass a store of merit. After receiving
My predictions, they will become buddhas.

15. "While thoroughly knowing that the nature of all *dharma*s[14]
Is empty and without substance,
They will singlemindedly seek to produce their pure lands
And will surely establish lands such as this."

16. The buddhas tell the bodhisattvas to go and pay homage
To the Buddha of the Land of Peace and Provision.
"Listen to his teaching, joyfully receive and practice it,
And then quickly reach the realm of purity.

17. "When you go to his glorious Pure Land,
You will instantly acquire supernatural powers.
Having, without fail, received predictions from Amitāyus,
You will attain perfect enlightenment.

18. "By the power of that buddha's Original Vows,
All who hear his Name and desire birth
Will, without exception, be born in his land
And effortlessly enter the stage of non-retrogression.

19. "Bodhisattvas, if you make vows
That your lands will be like this,
While aspiring to save all beings everywhere,
Your name will be renowned throughout the ten directions.

20. "In order to serve millions of tathāgatas,
You can assume various forms and fly to those lands;
After worshiping them with joyful hearts,
You will return to the Land of Peace and Provision."

21. Without a store of good from former lives,
One cannot hear this sutra;
But those who have strictly observed the precepts
Can hear the Right Dharma.

22. One who has met a World-honored One in the past 273b
Can accept this teaching.
Such a person respectfully worships, hears,
And upholds it, and rejoices so greatly as to dance.

23. Arrogant, corrupt, and indolent people
Cannot readily accept this teaching.
But those who have met buddhas in their former lives
Rejoice to hear it.

24. Neither *śrāvaka*s nor bodhisattvas are able to know
The Sage's mind exhaustively;
They are like those who are born blind
And yet wish to guide others.

25. The ocean of the Tathāgata's wisdom
Is deep, vast, and boundless.
Even sages of the Hinayana cannot fathom it;
Only the Buddha clearly knows it.

26. Let us suppose that all human beings,
Without exception, have attained enlightenment
And, with pure wisdom, realized original emptiness.
Even if they pondered the Buddha's wisdom for myriads of *kalpa*s

27. And expounded it with the utmost effort all through their lives,
They would not come to exhaustive knowledge of it.
The Buddha's wisdom is thus limitless
And pure to its depths.

28. To obtain human life is difficult in the extreme;
To meet a buddha in this world is also difficult;
It is difficult, too, for a person to attain faith and wisdom.
Once you have heard the Dharma, strive to reach its heart.

29. If you have heard the Dharma and do not forget it
But adore and revere it with great joy,
You are my good friend. For this reason,
You should awaken aspiration for enlightenment.

30. Even if the whole world is on fire,
Be sure to pass through it to hear the Dharma;
Then you will surely enter the Buddha's enlightenment
And everywhere deliver beings from the river of birth and death.

28 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "All the bodhisattvas in the land of Amitāyus will ultimately attain the stage of becoming a buddha after one more life. Excepted are those who have made original vows for the sake of sentient beings, resolving to cultivate the merit of realizing their great vows to save all sentient beings. Ānanda, each *śrāvaka* in the buddha land of Amitāyus emits a light for one fathom around his body. The light of a bodhisattva shines a hundred *yojana*s. There are two bodhisattvas who are the most dignified; their majestic light reaches everywhere in the universe of a thousand million worlds."

Ānanda asked, "What are the names of those two bodhisattvas?"

The Buddha replied, "One is called Avalokiteśvara and the other Mahāsthāmaprāpta. They had both performed bodhisattva practices in this world and, at the end of their lives, were born by transformation in that buddha

land. Ānanda, the sentient beings born there all fully possess the thirty-two physical characteristics of a great being as well as perfect wisdom, with which they penetrate deeply into the nature of all *dharma*s and reach their subtle essence. Their supernatural powers know no obstruction and their physical senses are sharp and clear. The bodhisattvas of lesser capacities attain two insights. Those with superior capacities attain innumerable [mer- 273c
its through the][15] insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s. Those bodhisattvas will not be subject to rebirth in evil realms before they become buddhas. Excepted are those who seek birth in the worlds of other directions during the turbulent period of the five defilements, manifesting their forms in the likeness of the beings there, as in this world. They can freely exercise supernatural powers and always remember their former lives."

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "By the Buddha's power, bodhisattvas of that land go to innumerable worlds of the ten directions, in as short a time as it takes to eat a meal, in order to pay homage and make offerings to the buddhas and World-honored Ones. If those bodhisattvas so wish, countless and innumerable offerings, such as flowers, incense, music, silken canopies, and banners, spontaneously appear before them as soon as they are imagined. They are rare and marvelous, unlike anything in this world. They are, accordingly, offered to the assemblies of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and *śrāvaka*s. The flowers remain in the sky and gather into canopies. Their brilliance is dazzling and their fragrance pervades everywhere. The flower canopies range in size from those of four hundred *li* in circumference up to those large enough to cover the universe of a thousand million worlds. As new flower canopies appear old ones disappear. These bodhisattvas all rejoice together, and, while poised in midair, play heavenly music and praise the virtues of the buddhas with hymns accompanied by wonderful sounds. They listen to the Dharma and attain immeasurable joy. After thus worshiping the buddhas, they quickly return home to the Pure Land before their meal."

29 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "When Amitāyus preaches the Dharma to *śrāvaka*s and bodhisattvas, they all assemble in the seven-jeweled lecture hall. There he fully expounds the teachings of the Way and proclaims the wonderful Dharma. The whole audience rejoices, comprehends, and attains enlightenment. At that time a breeze spontaneously arises in each of the four directions and wafts over the jeweled trees, producing sounds of the pentatonic

scales and causing innumerable exquisite flowers to fall like rain and scatter everywhere. Natural ways of glorification such as these are endlessly repeated. All the *deva*s bring with them a hundred thousand flowers, pieces of aromatic wood, and thousands of musical instruments to use as offerings to the Buddha and the assembly of bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s; they scatter flowers, diffuse perfumes everywhere, and play various kinds of music. They come and go in succession, giving way to each other. At such times their joy and happiness are beyond description."

30 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "The bodhisattvas born in that buddha land expound the Right Dharma whenever appropriate and, because they are in accord with the wisdom of enlightenment, their expositions are infallible and free of error. In regard to the myriads of things in that land, they have no thought of possession or attachment. Whether going or coming, proceeding or remaining, their hearts are unattached, their acts are in accordance with their will and are unrestricted, and they have no thought of discrimination. In them there is no idea of self or others, no idea of competition or dispute. With the heart of great compassion to benefit all living beings and with tenderness and self-control, they bear no enmity or grudge against anyone. Free of mental hindrances, they are pure in mind and without indolence.
274a Unbiased, noble-minded, sincere, and tranquil, their hearts can revere, appreciate, and enjoy the Dharma.

"Having extinguished all evil passions, they are free of those tendencies that cause one to fall into evil realms. They have accomplished all the duties of a bodhisattva and are fully endowed with immeasurable virtues. Having reached deep meditation and gained supernatural powers, transcendent knowledge, and wisdom, they are established in the seven practices leading to enlightenment and are devoted to the Buddha-Dharma.

"With the physical eye they see clearly, discerning objects without error; the sight of their divine eye reaches everywhere without limit; with the Dharma eye they observe and know thoroughly the teachings of the Way; with the wisdom eye they see truth and attain the other shore; with the buddha eye they completely realize the nature of *dharma*s; and with unhindered wisdom they expound the Dharma to others.

"Although they observe with the eye of equality that the three worlds are empty and nonexistent, they strive to learn the Buddha-Dharma and

acquire varied eloquence to rid living beings of affliction caused by the evil passions. Since all *dharma*s have arisen from suchness, the bodhisattvas see them as they really are and know skillful means of speech that will develop good habits and destroy bad ones in living beings. They dislike secular talk, enjoying only right discourse on the Dharma.

"They cultivate roots of virtue, revere the path of the Buddha, and know that all *dharma*s are completely tranquil and nonexistent. Their samsaric bodies and evil passions have been extinguished together with their remaining karmic tendencies. When they hear the profound Dharma their minds are free of doubt and fear. They are always able to cultivate great compassion, which is deep and subtle, embracing everything like the sky and bearing all like the earth. Having reached the end of the single path they have gone to the other shore. Since they have cut the net of doubt wisdom arises in their minds. Within the Buddha-Dharma there is nothing that they do not comprehend.

"Their wisdom is like the ocean, and their *samādhi* is like the king of mountains. The light of their wisdom, being brilliant and pure, outshines the sun and moon. They are in complete possession of the pure, undefiled Dharma. They are like the Himalayas, because the brilliance of their virtues is reflected evenly and clearly. They are like the great earth, because they have no discriminative thoughts, such as pure or impure, beautiful or ugly. They are like pure water, because they wash away afflictions and defilements. They are like the king of fire, because they burn the firewood of all evil passions. They are like a great wind, because they travel throughout the worlds without hindrance. They are like the sky, because they have no attachments. They are like lotuses, because nothing in the world can defile them. They are like a great vehicle, because they carry the multitude of beings out of birth and death. They are like a heavy cloud, because they cause the great thunder of the Dharma to roar and awaken the unenlightened. They are like a great rain, because they cause the nectar of the Dharma to fall like rainshowers to nourish living beings. They are like the [Encircling] Adamantine Mountains, because demons and non-Buddhists cannot move them. They are like the king of the Brahmā Heaven, because they are foremost in the performance of various good deeds. They are like the *nyagrodha* tree, because they afford shelter to all beings. They are like the *uḍumbara* flower, because they rarely appear in the world and are difficult to encounter. They are like the gold-winged

garuḍa, because they subdue non-Buddhists. They are like a flock of playful birds, because they do not store things. They are like the king of bulls, because they are invincible. They are like the king of elephants, because they conquer adversaries. They are like the king of lions, because they fear nothing.
274b They are like the vast sky, because their great compassion reaches everywhere without discrimination.

"They have destroyed envy by not being envious of the superiority of others. With singleheartedness they seek the Dharma tirelessly. Always desiring to expound the doctrine, they never grow weary. Striking Dharma drums and hoisting Dharma banners, they cause the sun of wisdom to shine forth and dissipate the darkness of ignorance. They perform the six acts of accord and respect, and always provide others with the gift of the Dharma. Strong willed and diligent, their determination never falters. Thus they become lamps for the world and fields of supreme merit; they always become teachers and harbor no thought of discrimination, aversion, or attachment. They seek only the right path, finding neither joy nor sorrow in other matters. They extract thorns of passion and give peace of mind to multitudes of beings. Because of their merit and wisdom,[16] there is no one who does not revere them.

"They have destroyed the hindrance of the three defilements and mastered the supernatural powers. They also possess the power of good karma from their former lives,[17] the power of guiding others, of the will, of vows, of employing skillful means, of continuous practice, of doing good, of meditation, of wisdom, and of hearing the Dharma widely. They also possess the power of the six *pāramitā*s—giving (*dāna*), morality (*śīla*), patience (*kṣānti*), effort (*vīrya*), meditation (*dhyāna*), and wisdom (*prajñā*)—and the power of right mindfulness, concentration, contemplation, the supernatural faculties, and transcendent knowledge, the power to tame and train living beings in the right way, as well as other powers.

"Fully possessed of all the physical characteristics and marks, virtues, and eloquence, they have no equals. They revere and worship innumerable buddhas and are, in turn, always praised by them. They have completed the bodhisattva's course of *pāramitā*s and practiced the *samādhi*s of emptiness, non-form, and non-desire; the *samādhi* of non-arising, non-perishing, and many other *samādhi*s; they have gone far beyond the stages of *śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s.

"Ānanda, bodhisattvas of that land have innumerable virtues such as these, of which I have given you only an outline. If I were to expound them in full detail, a thousand million *kalpa*s would not be long enough to do so."

31 The Buddha said to Bodhisattva Maitreya and to *deva*s and humans, "The virtue and wisdom of *śrāvaka*s and bodhisattvas in the land of Amitāyus are indescribable. That land is sublime, blissful, serene, and pure. Why do you not diligently practice good, reflect on the naturalness of the Way, and realize that it is above all discrimination and is boundlessly pervasive? You should each make a great effort to attain it. Strive to escape from samsara and be born in the Land of Peace and Provision. Then, the causes of the five evil realms having been destroyed, they will naturally cease to be and so you will progress unhindered in your pursuit of the Way. The Pure Land is easy to reach but very few actually go there. It rejects no one but naturally and unfailingly attracts beings. Why do you not abandon worldly matters and strive to enter the Way? If you do, you will obtain an infinitely long life and one of limitless bliss.

"People of the world, being weak in virtue, engage in strife over matters that are not urgent. In the midst of abject wickedness and extreme afflictions they painstakingly toil for their living. Whether noble or corrupt, rich or poor, young or old, male or female, all people worry about wealth and property. In this there is no difference between rich and poor; both have their anxieties. Groaning in dejection and sorrow, they pile up thoughts of anguish
or, driven by inner urges, they run wildly in all directions and thus have no 274c
time for peace and rest.

"For example, if they own fields they are concerned about them. If they have houses they worry about them. They are also anxious about their six domestic animals, such as cows and horses, about their male and female servants, money, wealth, clothes, food, and furnishings. With deepening troubles they sigh repeatedly, and anxiety increasingly torments and terrifies them. Sudden misfortune may befall them: all their possessions may be destroyed by fire, swept away by floods, plundered by robbers, or seized by adversaries or creditors. Then gnawing grief afflicts them and incessantly troubles their hearts. Anger seizes their minds, keeps them in constant agitation, increasingly tightens its grip, hardens their hearts, and never leaves them.

"When their lives end in such agonizing conditions, they must leave everyone and everything behind. Even nobles and wealthy people have these worries. With much anxiety and fear, they endure such tribulations. Breaking out in cold sweats or fevers, they suffer unremitting pain.

"The poor and the underprivileged are constantly destitute. If, for example, they have no fields, they are unhappy and want them. If they have no houses, they are unhappy and want them. If they have none of the six domestic animals, such as cows and horses, or if they have no male or female servants, or lack money, wealth, clothes, food, or furnishings, they are unhappy and want those as well. If they possess some of these things, others may be lacking. If they have this, they do not have that, and so they wish to possess all. But even if by some chance they come to possess everything, it will soon be destroyed or lost. Then, dejected and sorrowful, they may strive to obtain such things again but it may be impossible. Brooding over this is to no avail. Exhausted in mind and body, they become restless in all their activities and anxieties follow on their heels. Such are the troubles they must endure. Breaking out in cold sweats or fevers, they suffer unremitting pain. Such conditions may result in the sudden end of their lives or an early death. Since they have not done any good in particular, nor followed the Way, nor acted virtuously, when they die they will depart alone to an inferior world. Although they are destined to different states of existence, none of them understands the law of karma that sends them there.

"People of the world, parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, and other family members and kinsmen,[18] should respect and love each other, refraining from hatred and envy. They should share things with others, not be greedy and miserly, always speak friendly words with a pleasing smile, and not hurt each other.

"If one disagrees with others and grows angry, however small one's grudge and enmity may be in this life, these will increase in the life to come until they grow into a mass of hostility. For if people are engaged in tormenting and harming each other in this life, such conflict may not immediately end in mutual destruction. But persistent bitterness and raging fury are impressed upon the mind, and thus naturally leave indelible marks on consciousness, so that those involved will be reborn at about the same time to take revenge on each other.

"Further, in the midst of worldly desires and attachments one comes and goes alone, is born alone, and dies alone. After death, one goes to a painful or pleasant state of existence. Each receives his karmic consequences, and no one else can take his place. In accordance with different acts of good and evil, people are destined to realms of bliss or suffering. Unalterably bound by their karma, they depart for those realms all alone. Having reached the other world, they cannot see each other. The law of good and evil naturally pursues them, and wherever they may be reborn distance and darkness always separate them. Since their paths of karma are different, it is impossible to tell the time of their reunion and it is difficult to meet again. Can they ever see each other once more?

"Why do they not abandon all worldly involvements and strive, while 275a
they are strong and healthy, to pursue good and diligently seek deliverance from samsara? If they do they will be able to attain infinite life. Why do they not seek the Way? What is there in this world that should be longed for? What pleasure is there that ought to be sought after?

"Thus people of the world do not believe in pursuing good and receiving its reward or in practicing the Way and attaining enlightenment; neither do they believe in transmigration and retribution for evil acts or reward for good ones, such as obtaining merit by helping others. Believing that these do not exist, they totally reject such a view.

"Further, by so doing, they cling to their own views more tenaciously. Later generations learn from previous ones to act likewise. Fathers, perpetuating their wrong views, pass them on to their children. Since parents and grandparents from the beginning did not do good deeds, were ignorant of the Way, committed foolish acts, and were benighted, insensitive, and callous, their descendants are now unable to realize the truth of birth and death and the law of karma. There is no one to tell them about this. Nobody seeks to know the cause of fortune and misfortune, happiness and misery, although these states result from such acts.

"The reality of birth and death is such that the sorrow of parting is mutually felt by all generations. A father cries over the deaths of his children; children cry over the death of their father. Brothers, sisters, husbands, and wives mourn each other's deaths. According to the basic law of impermanence, whether death will occur in order of seniority or in the reverse order

is unpredictable. All things must pass. Nothing stays forever. Few believe this, even if someone teaches and exhorts them. And so the stream of birth and death continues everlastingly.

"Because they are stupid and callous, such people do not accept the teachings of the Buddha; they lack forethought and only wish to satisfy their own desires. They are deluded by their passionate attachments, unaware of the Way, misguided and trapped by anger and enmity, and intent on gaining wealth and gratifying their carnal desires like wolves. And so, unable to follow the Way, they are again subject to suffering in evil realms in an endless cycle of birth and death. How miserable and pitiable this is!

"In the same family, when one of the parents, children, brothers, sisters, or the husband or wife dies, those surviving mourn over the loss and their attachment to the deceased persists. Deep sorrow fills their hearts and, grief-stricken, they mournfully think of the departed. Days pass and years go by, but their distress goes on. Even if someone teaches them the Way, their minds are not awakened. Brooding over fond memories of the dead, they cannot rid themselves of attachment. Being ignorant, inert, and illusion-bound, they are unable to think deeply, keep their self-composure, practice the Way with diligence, or dissociate themselves from worldly matters. As they wander here and there they come to their end and die before entering on the Way. Then what can be done for them?

"Because they are spiritually defiled, deeply troubled, and confused, people indulge their passions. Hence, many are ignorant of the Way and few realize it. Everyone is restlessly busy, having nothing on which to rely. Whether moral or corrupt, of high or low rank, rich or poor, noble or base, all are preoccupied with their own work. They entertain venomous thoughts, creating a widespread and dismal atmosphere of malevolence. Subversive activities are planned, contrary to the universal law and the wishes of the people.

"Injustice and vice inevitably follow and are allowed to run their course unchecked until evil karma accumulates to the limit. Before they expect their lives to end people meet sudden death and fall into evil realms, where they will suffer excruciating torments for many lives. They will not be able to
275b escape for many thousands of *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s. How indescribably painful! How pitiable this is!"

32 The Buddha said to Bodhisattva Maitreya and to *deva*s and humans, "I have told you the truth about people of the world. Such being their mode of life, they are unable to enter the Way. Therefore, you should think deeply and try to avoid various evil acts; choose the good and diligently practice it. A life of addiction to desires or a life of pomp and vainglory cannot last long. All must pass; there is nothing you can really enjoy. Since you have encountered a buddha in this world you should assiduously practice the Way. Anyone who sincerely desires birth in the Land of Peace and Bliss is able to attain purity of wisdom and supremacy in virtue. You should not follow the urges of the passions, break the precepts, or fall behind others in the practice of the Way. If you have doubts and are not clear about my teaching, ask me, the Buddha, about anything and I shall explain it to you."

Bodhisattva Maitreya prostrated himself on the ground and said, "Your majestic glory, O Buddha, is awe-inspiring, and your exposition is most pleasing to me. Having heard your teaching I feel deeply that people of the world are just as you have described. Your compassionate revelation of the Great Way has opened our eyes and ears, awakening us to liberation. Those who have heard your teachings are all filled with joy. *Deva*s, humans, and lesser beings, including even those that crawl, have all been blessed by your compassionate guidance and have thereby attained deliverance from suffering and affliction.

"The Buddha's admonition is indeed profound and appropriate, and his wisdom clearly surveys things in the eight directions, above and below, penetrating all in the past, present, and future. Our liberation in the present life is entirely due to the Buddha's perseverance and painstaking efforts in his former lives when he was seeking the Way. His benevolence covers the whole world and the extent of his merit is majestic and glorious. His light penetrates to the utmost ends of space and guides people to nirvana. He reveals the sutras, destroys wrong views, and subdues demons. Thus his influence extends boundlessly in the ten directions. The Buddha is the King of the Dharma; his virtue surpasses that of all the sages. He is the teacher of all *deva*s and humans and enables them to enter the Way according to their wishes. Having been able to meet you, O Buddha, and also to hear the Name of Amitāyus,[19] we have all attained joy and illumination."

33 The Buddha said to Maitreya, “What you say is true. Those who adore and revere a buddha attain great merit. Buddhas very rarely appear in the world. Having become a buddha in this life, I have taught the Dharma, expounded teachings of the Way, cleared people’s doubts, eradicated the causes of lust and desire, and blocked the source of all evils. Visiting various places in the three worlds, I encounter no obstructions. The wisdom disclosed in the scriptures provides for all ways of life. It keeps essential principles together and clearly reveals the truth. I have explained the reality of the five realms, thereby freeing those who have not yet attained deliverance and distinguishing between the paths of samsara and nirvana.

“Maitreya, you should know that you have, for innumerable *kalpa*s, been perfecting the bodhisattva practices to save sentient beings. Incalculable indeed is the number of beings who under your guidance have attained
275c the Way and reached nirvana. From time immemorial, you and all the *deva*s and humans in the ten directions and the four groups of followers have been floundering in the five realms of samsara, undergoing indescribable troubles and afflictions. Until you were born in this life, you, too, underwent endless cycles of birth and death. Now you have encountered a buddha, listened to his expositions of the Dharma, and been able to learn about Amitāyus. What pleasure and joy this is for you and me to share! I share the joy with you.

“It is time for all to seek deliverance from the pains of birth, sickness, old age, and death. Outflows of depravity and defilement are everywhere, and there is nothing in which you can find true joy. You should resolutely do worthy deeds with propriety, strive to do more good, control and purify yourselves, wash away the mental defilements, be sincere in word and deed, and allow no contradiction between what you think and what you do. Seek your own liberation and then turn to saving others; straightforwardly aspire to be born in the Pure Land and accumulate roots of virtue. However hard you may practice in this life, it can only be for a short while. In the life to come you will be born in the land of Amitāyus and enjoy endless bliss there. Being forever in accord with the Way, you will no longer be subject to birth and death and be free of the afflictions caused by greed, anger, and ignorance. If you wish your life to be as long as a *kalpa,* a hundred *kalpa*s, or ten million *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s, it will be just as you please. You will dwell in effortless spontaneity and attain nirvana. You should each diligently seek to realize

your aspiration. Do not entertain any doubt or give up your endeavors, lest as a result of that fault you should be born into the seven-jeweled palace in the border region of the Pure Land and be subject to various disadvantages for five hundred years."

Maitreya said to the Buddha, "Having received your considerate admonition, we will diligently practice the Way and follow your teaching. We will not allow any doubt to arise."

34 The Buddha said to Maitreya, "If here in this world you are upright in thought and will, and abstain from doing evil, then you will attain the utmost virtue, unsurpassed in all the lands throughout the ten directions. Why is this so? *Deva*s and humans in the buddha lands naturally do good and rarely commit evil, and so it is easy to teach and train them. Having become a buddha in this world, I now dwell in the midst of the five evils, the five sufferings, and the five burnings. This is extremely painful for me. I will teach multitudes of beings, making them abandon the five evils, avoid the five sufferings, and escape from the five burnings. I will train their minds and lead them to practice the five good deeds, so that they may acquire merit and virtue and attain liberation, long life, and nirvana."

The Buddha continued. "What are the five evils? What are the five sufferings? What are the five burnings? What is the way to extinguish the five evils and lead people to practice the five good deeds, so that they may acquire merit and virtue and attain liberation, long life, and nirvana?"

35 The Buddha said, "The first evil is this. *Deva*s, humans, and lesser beings, including even those that crawl, are bent on doing evil. There is no being that is not. The strong subdue the weak; all inflict serious injuries [upon] and kill each other; all devour their prey. Not knowing how to do good, they
commit evil and commit outrageous and unruly deeds. Later, they receive 276a
retribution; it is natural that they should be destined to evil realms. Demigods keep records of offenders' acts and make sure that they are punished. That is why some are poor and destitute, corrupt, beggarly, lonely, deaf, dumb, blind, stupid, wicked, physically handicapped, deranged, or subnormal. But others are honorable, noble, wealthy, intelligent, or clever. This is the result of good and meritorious acts of benevolence and the performance of their duties to their parents in former lives.

"In this world prisons are set up by the law, and those who are unafraid of them and commit offenses are sent there for punishment. However desperately they may wish to escape, it is impossible to do so. Such is retribution in this world, but in lives to come, punishment is longer and more severe for such evildoers. The suffering of transmigration through dark and dismal realms is comparable to the severest and most painful punishment ever enforced by law.

"Thus, through the natural working of karma, they undergo immeasurable sufferings in the three evil realms. In successive transmigrations they are reborn into different states and forms; their lifespans are sometimes long and sometimes short. Their transient selves, vital energy, and consciousness[20] transmigrate through the natural working of karma. Although each individual is reborn alone, those bound by common karma come to be born together and take revenge upon each other. So this condition persists endlessly, and until the effect of their evil karma is exhausted there is no possibility of avoiding their enemies. Floundering in samsara, they have no chance of escape or of attaining liberation. The pain that they must undergo is indescribable. Since this law naturally obtains everywhere between heaven and earth, even if good or evil acts do not immediately bring about reward or retribution they will certainly result in them sooner or later. This I call the first great evil, the first suffering, and the first burning. Those afflictions are such that they are comparable to a huge fire burning people alive.

"If, in the midst of this, one controls one's thoughts with singlemindedness, does worthy deeds with proper demeanor, commits no evil, and performs only good, then with the merit and virtue acquired one reaches liberation and is able to escape from this world, be reborn in heavenly realms, and finally reach nirvana. This is the first great good."

36 The Buddha continued, "The second evil is that people of this world—parents, children, brothers and sisters, family members, husbands and wives—all lack moral principles, break laws, conduct themselves arrogantly, commit licentious and unruly acts, pursue their own pleasures, enjoy themselves as they will, and deceive each other. What they think contradicts what they say; they speak without sincerity, flatter others with deceitful intention, fawn upon others with artful words, envy the reputation of sages, abuse the virtuous, and entrap people by dishonest means.

"Masters are unwise in appointing retainers, who, exploiting the situation, seek every opportunity for trickery and deceit. Rulers, being unrighteous, are deceived by ministers and foolishly remove loyal and faithful subjects. This is contrary to the will of heaven. Ministers betray their rulers; children deceive their parents; brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, kinsmen, and friends deceive each other. They harbor greed, anger, and ignorance and, desiring many possessions, seek their own advantage. All people are the same at heart, whether they are people of high and honorable positions or of lower and despised classes. They bring their homes and themselves to ruin and recklessly destroy their kindred. Although there are family members, friends, villagers, townspeople, ignorant and vulgar groups working together, 276b
all seek to gain their own profit, thereby incurring the anger and enmity of others. When people grow rich, they become miserly and uncharitable. Greedily attached to their wealth,[21] they toil with mind and body to retain it. When their end comes, they find nothing on which to rely. Ultimately they are born and depart alone, with nobody to accompany them. Bliss or misery resulting from good or evil acts follow them in their future lives. Thus they are reborn in pleasant or painful states. Even if they later feel regret, what good will that do?

"People of the world, being dark-hearted and lacking insight, hate and abuse good people and show them no respect. They are attached to wrongdoing and willfully commit unlawful acts. They always covet the wealth of others and harbor intentions of stealing. After spending and squandering what they have robbed from others, they seek to regain it. Because of their own hidden motives and dishonesty, they slyly study the reactions shown on the faces of others. Since they are unable to think far ahead, when things go wrong they become despondent with chagrin.

"In this world there are prisons established by law where offenders are sent to receive punishment according to their offenses. In their previous lives they neither believed in the Way nor cultivated roots of virtue. In this life, too, if they commit evil, demigods know and keep records of their acts; so when they die, they fall into evil realms. Thus, because of the natural working of karma, there are the three evil realms and innumerable sufferings through which evildoers must pass, life after life, for many *kalpa*s, with no end in sight. It is indeed difficult for them to attain release. The pain they

must undergo is indescribable. This is called the second great evil, the second suffering, and the second burning. The afflictions are such that they are comparable to a huge fire burning people alive.

"If, in the midst of this, one controls one's thoughts with singlemindedness, does worthy deeds with proper demeanor, commits no evil, and performs only good, then with the merit and virtue acquired one reaches liberation and is able to escape from this world, be reborn in heavenly realms, and finally reach nirvana. This is the second great good."

37 The Buddha continued, "The third evil is this. People of the world live together, inhabiting this realm between heaven and earth, with a limited lifespan. On the one hand, among the higher levels there are wise, rich, honorable, noble, and wealthy people. On the other hand, among the lower levels there are people who are poor, debased, crude, and foolish. Besides, there are evildoers who always harbor vicious thoughts and think only of self-gratification; they are full of worries and sunk in lust and attachment; they are restless in their daily lives, greedy and miserly, and desirous of what they have no right to possess. They gloat over fair-skinned women, behave licentiously and commit obscene acts with them, hate their own wives, and secretly frequent brothels. Consequently, after squandering all their resources they begin to break the law. They form bands, start riots, engage in fighting, unlawfully attack and kill people, and plunder property.

"Some have evil designs on the possessions of others. Without working at their own occupations, they acquire things through theft. Driven by desire, they commit further offenses. Feverishly agitated, they intimidate and rob people to support their own wives and children with the goods thus acquired. Obeying only the dictates of their passions, they become addicted to wanton pleasures. They also disregard seniority in kinship, causing sorrow and anguish to other family members and relatives; furthermore, they take no account of the laws of the state.

"But such evils are known to others and also to demons. The sun and
276c moon recognize them, and demigods keep records of their doings. Thus, because of the natural workings of karma, there are three evil realms and innumerable sufferings through which evildoers must pass, life after life, for many *kalpa*s, with no end in sight. It is indeed difficult for them to gain

release. The pain they must undergo is indescribable. This is called the third great evil, the third suffering, and the third burning. The afflictions are such that they are comparable to a huge fire burning people alive.

"If, in the midst of this, one controls one's thoughts with singlemindedness, does worthy deeds with proper demeanor, commits no evil, and performs only good, then with the merit and virtue acquired one reaches liberation and is able to escape from this world, be reborn in heavenly realms, and finally reach nirvana. This is the third great good."

38 The Buddha continued, "The fourth evil is this. People of the world do not think of doing good. They incite each other to commit various kinds of evil—uttering harsh and abusive words, telling lies, and engaging in idle talk. They slander others and cause contention. They hate and envy good people and ruin the wise, while they rejoice in watching this behind the scenes. They are neglectful of their parents, make light of their teachers and elders, fail to win the trust of their friends, and lack sincerity. Holding themselves in high esteem, they think that they are virtuous but act waywardly in an overbearing manner and despise others. Unaware of their own evil, they never feel ashamed of themselves. Boastful of their physical strength, they demand respect and fear from others. Taking no heed of heaven, earth, demigods, or the sun and moon, they disdain to do any good. So they are difficult to train and convert. Holding themselves in high esteem, they demand their own way. Arrogant and afraid of nothing, they always assume a haughty attitude. But demigods keep records of their evils. Perhaps there was some meritorious act in their former lives, and they can count on the effect of that small amount of good. But, since they commit evil again in this life, their store of merit is soon exhausted; good divinities forsake them, leaving them alone with no one on whom to depend. When their lives end, all their evil recoils upon them and forces them, through the natural working of karma, to descend to the evil realms. Again, as the exact records of their deeds in the hands of the demigods dictate, their karmic transgressions and offenses condemn them to hellish realms. Retribution for evil comes about naturally and nothing can stop it. They must go into the red-hot cauldrons, where their bodies are melted down with the utmost torment and anguish. Even if at that time they repent of their evil deeds, what good will that do? The way of heaven takes its inevitable course without mistake.

"Thus, because of the natural working of karma, there are the three evil realms and innumerable kinds of suffering through which evildoers must pass, life after life, for many *kalpa*s, with no end in sight. It is indeed difficult for them to gain release, and the pain they must undergo is indescribable. This is called the fourth great evil, the fourth suffering, and the fourth burning. The afflictions are such that they are comparable to a huge fire burning people alive.

"If, in the midst of this, one controls one's thoughts with singlemindedness, does worthy deeds with proper demeanor, commits no evil, and performs only good, then with the merit and virtue acquired one reaches liberation and is able to escape from this world, be reborn in heavenly realms, and finally reach nirvana. This is the fourth great good."

39 The Buddha continued, "The fifth evil is this. People of the world are
277a indecisive and slothful, reluctant to do good, lacking in self-discipline, and they do not work hard at their occupations; so their families and dependents are left to suffer from hunger and cold. When reproached by their parents, they retort angrily with scornful looks. In such conflicts they are far from peaceful; they can be as violent and frenzied as when enemies confront each other; as a result, parents wish that they had no children.

"In dealing with others, they are licentious and wayward, causing trouble and annoyance to many. Even when they are morally obliged to others, they neglect their duties and have no intention of repaying their indebtedness. Destitute and driven to the most desperate ends, they have no way of regaining their wealth. Although eager to obtain much profit and appropriate the riches of others, they waste their money on wanton pleasures. As this becomes a habit, they grow accustomed to acquiring property illegally and to spending their ill-gained profits on personal luxuries; indulging in wine and sumptuous food, they eat and drink to excess. Profligate and contentious as they are, they engage in foolish quarrels. Unable to understand others, they forcibly impose their will upon them.

"When they come upon people who are good, they hate and abuse them. Lacking morality and decorum, they do not reflect on their conduct, and so are presumptuous and insistent, refusing to take the advice and admonitions of others. They are unconcerned if their kinsmen, from the closest to the sixth blood relative, have no means of livelihood. They disregard their parents' benevolence and do not fulfill obligations to their teachers and friends.

They think only of doing evil; their mouths continuously speak malice; and with their bodies, they are forever committing evil. In their whole lives they do not do even one good deed.

"Furthermore, they do not believe in the ancient sages, nor the Buddhist teachings, nor the path of practice leading to liberation. Neither do they believe that after death one is reborn into another state of existence, that good deeds bring about good rewards, or that evil acts bring about evil consequences. They plot to murder an arhat or to cause disruption in the sangha; they even think of killing their parents, brothers, sisters, or other relatives. For this reason, even their kinsmen, from the closest to the sixth blood relative, hate them so much as to wish them dead.

"Such people of the world are all of the same mind. They are foolish and ignorant, lacking the wisdom to know whence they have come into life or whither they are going after death. Neither humane toward others nor obedient to their elders, they rebel against the whole world. Nevertheless, they expect good fortune and seek long lives, only to meet death in the end. Even if someone compassionately admonishes them, trying to lead them to thoughts of good, and teaches them that there are naturally good and evil realms of samsara, they will not believe him. However hard one may try to persuade them, it is useless. Their minds are closed, and they refuse to listen to others or understand their teachings. When their lives are about to end, fear and revulsion arise in turn. Not having previously done any good, they are filled with remorse when they come to their end. But what good will that do then?

"Between heaven and earth, the five realms are clearly distinguishable. They are vast and deep, extending boundlessly. In return for good or evil deeds, happiness or misery ensues. The result of one's karma must be borne by oneself alone, and no one else can take one's place. This is natural law. Misfortune follows evil deeds as their retribution, which is impossible to avoid. Good people do good deeds, and so enjoy pleasure after pleasure and proceed from light to greater light. Evildoers commit crimes, and so suffer pain after pain and wander from darkness to deeper darkness. No one, except the Buddha, knows this completely. Even though someone admonishes and teaches them, very few believe; and so the cycles of birth and death never
cease and the evil paths continue endlessly. The karmic consequences for 277b
such worldly people cannot be described in detail.

"Thus, because of the natural working of karma, there are innumerable kinds of suffering in the three evil realms through which wicked beings must pass, life after life, for many *kalpa*s, with no end in sight. It is indeed difficult for them to gain release, and the pain they must undergo is indescribable. This is called the fifth great evil, the fifth suffering, and the fifth burning. The afflictions are such that they are comparable to a huge fire burning people alive.

"If, in the midst of this, one controls one's thoughts with singlemindedness, does worthy deeds with proper demeanor, mindfully recollects, harmonizes words and deeds, acts with sincerity, utters true words, speaks from the heart, commits no evil, and performs only good, then with the merit and virtue acquired one reaches liberation and is able to escape from this world, be reborn in heavenly realms, and finally reach nirvana. This is the fifth great good."

40 The Buddha said to Maitreya, "I shall explain further. Such are the afflictions of the five evils in this world. The five sufferings and the five burnings continue to arise from them. People commit nothing but evil and fail to cultivate roots of virtue, and so it is natural that they all go to evil realms. Even in this life they suffer from incurable illnesses. Longing for death, they cannot die; craving for life, they cannot live. Thus they are an example to others of what the retribution for evil acts is like. After death, driven by their karma, they fall into the three evil realms, where they suffer countless tortures and are themselves consigned to the flames.

"After a long time they are reborn again in this world, only to foment hatred against each other. At first hatred is slight but finally develops into a major evil. All this is because of their greedy attachment to wealth and sensuous pleasures and of their refusal to share with others. Further, wayward thoughts arise from the desires born of stupidity. Their bondage to evil passions will never be severed. In the pursuit of selfish gain, there is no chance for them to reflect on their evils and turn to good. When wealthy and prosperous, they are happy and do not learn to be modest and virtuous. Consequently, their pomp and power are short-lived; when these are exhausted, they must undergo further afflictions. Their sufferings are bound to increase in time to come.

"The law of karma operates like a net stretched everywhere; in its meshes it inevitably catches all offenders. The net woven of large and small ropes

covers the whole world, from top to bottom, and those caught in it feel utterly helpless and tremble in fear. This net has been in existence from of old. How painful and heart-rending!"

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "People of this world are as I have described. All the buddhas pity them and with divine powers destroy their evils and lead them all to good. If you give up wrong views, hold fast to the scriptures and the precepts, and practice the Way without committing any fault, then you will finally be able to attain the path to liberation and nirvana."

The Buddha continued, "You and other *deva*s and people of the present and future generations, having received the Buddha's teachings, should reflect upon them and, while following them, should remain upright in thought and do virtuous deeds. Rulers should abide by morality, reign with beneficence, and decree that everyone should maintain proper conduct, revere the sages, respect people of virtue, be benevolent and kind to others, and take care not to disregard the Buddha's teachings and admonitions. All should seek liberation, cut the roots of samsara and its various evils, and so aspire to escape
from the paths of immeasurable sorrow, fear, and pain in the three evil realms. 277c

"In this world, you should extensively plant roots of virtue, be benevolent, give generously, abstain from breaking the precepts, be patient and diligent, teach people with sincerity and wisdom, do virtuous deeds, and practice good. If you strictly observe the precepts of abstinence with upright thought and mindfulness even for a day and a night, the merit acquired will surpass that of practicing good in the land of Amitāyus for a hundred years. The reason is that in that buddha land of effortless spontaneity all the inhabitants do good without committing even a hair's breadth of evil. If in this world you do good for ten days and nights, the merit acquired will surpass that of practicing good in the buddha lands of other directions for a thousand years. The reason is that in the buddha lands of other directions many practice good and very few commit evil. These are lands where everything is naturally provided as a result of one's merit and virtue, and so no evil is done. But in this world much evil is committed and few are provided for naturally; people must work hard to get what they want. Since they intend to deceive each other, their minds are troubled, their bodies are exhausted, and they drink bitterness and eat hardship. In this way, they are too much preoccupied with their toil to have time for rest.

"Out of pity for you and other *deva*s and humans, I have taken great pains in exhorting you to do good deeds. I have given you instructions appropriate to your capacities. You have, without fail, accepted my teachings and practiced them, and so have all entered on the Way as you wished.

"Wherever the Buddha comes to stay, there is no state, town, or village that is not blessed by his virtues. The whole country reposes in peace and harmony. The sun and moon shine with pure brilliance; wind arises and rain falls at the right time. There is no calamity or epidemic, and so the country becomes wealthy and its people enjoy peace. Soldiers and weapons become useless; and people esteem virtue, practice benevolence, and diligently cultivate courteous modesty."

The Buddha continued, "My concern for you, *deva*s and humans, is greater than the care of parents for their children. I have become a buddha in this world, destroyed the five evils, removed the five sufferings, and extinguished the five burnings. I have countered evil with good, eradicated the suffering of birth and death, and enabled people to acquire the five virtues and attain the peace of unconditioned nirvana. But after I have departed from this world, my teaching will gradually decline and people will fall prey to flattery and deceit and commit various evils again, resulting in the recurrence of the five sufferings and the five burnings. As time goes on, their sufferings will intensify. As it is impossible to describe this in detail, I have given you only a brief outline."

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "You should each ponder on this well, teach and admonish each other, and be on guard against disobeying the Buddha's instruction."

Bodhisattva Maitreya, with his palms together, said, "O Buddha, how appropriate your admonition is! People of the world are just as you have described. O Tathāgata, you take pity on and care for us without discrimination and seek to deliver us all from suffering. Having accepted the Buddha's repeated exhortations, I will be careful not to disobey them."

41 The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Rise to your feet, rearrange your robes, put your palms together, and respectfully revere and worship Amitāyus. Buddha tathāgatas in the lands of the ten directions always praise with one accord that buddha's virtue of nonattachment and unimpeded activity."

Ānanda stood up, rearranged his robes, assumed the correct posture, faced westward, and, demonstrating his sincere reverence, joined his palms together, prostrated himself on the ground, and worshiped Amitāyus.

Then he said to Śākyamuni Buddha, "World-honored One, I wish to see 278a
that buddha, his Land of Peace and Bliss, and its hosts of bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s."

As soon as he had said this, Amitāyus emitted a great light, which illuminated all the buddha lands. The Encircling Adamantine Mountains, Mount Sumeru, together with large and small mountains and everything else shone with the same [golden] color. That light was like the flood at the end of the period of cosmic change that fills the whole world, when myriads of things are submerged, and as far as the eye can see there is nothing but the vast expanse of water. Even so was the flood of light emanating from Amitāyus. All the lights of *śrāvaka*s and bodhisattvas were outshone and surpassed, and only the Buddha's light remained shining bright and glorious.

At that time Ānanda saw the splendor and majesty of Amitāyus resembling Mount Sumeru, which rises above the whole world. There was no place that was not illuminated by the light emanating from his body of glory. The four groups of followers of the Buddha in the assembly saw all this at the same time. Likewise, those of the Pure Land saw everything in this world.

42 Then the Buddha said to Ānanda and Bodhisattva Maitreya, "Have you seen that land filled with excellent and glorious manifestations, all spontaneously produced, from the ground to the Heaven of Pure Abode?"

Ānanda replied, "Yes, I have."

The Buddha asked, "Have you also heard the great voice of Amitāyus expound the Dharma to all the worlds, guiding sentient beings to the Way of the Buddha?"

Ānanda replied, "Yes, I have."

The Buddha further asked, "Have you also seen the inhabitants of that land move freely, riding in seven-jeweled airborne palaces as large as a hundred thousand *yojana*s, to worship the buddhas of the lands in the ten directions?"

"Yes, I have," replied Ānanda.

"Have you also seen that some of the inhabitants are in the embryonic state of rebirth?"

"Yes, I have. Those in the embryonic state dwell in palaces as high as a hundred *yojana*s or five hundred *yojana*s, where they spontaneously enjoy pleasures as do those in the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods."

43 Then Bodhisattva Maitreya said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, for what reason are some of the inhabitants of that land in the embryonic state and the others born by transformation?"

The Buddha replied, "Maitreya, if there are sentient beings who do various meritorious deeds, aspiring for birth in that land while still entertaining doubt, such beings are unable to comprehend the buddha wisdom, inconceivable wisdom, ineffable wisdom, boundless Mahayana wisdom, and incomparable, unequaled, and unsurpassed supreme wisdom. Although they doubt these wisdoms, they still believe in retribution for evil and reward for virtue and so cultivate a store of merit, aspiring for birth in that land. Such beings are born in a palace, where they dwell for five hundred years without being able to behold the Buddha, hear his exposition of the Dharma, or see the hosts of bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s. For this reason, that type of birth in the Pure Land is called the 'embryonic state.'

"If there are sentient beings who with resolute faith accept these kinds of wisdom, from the Buddha's wisdom to the supreme wisdom, do meritorious deeds, and sincerely transfer the merit acquired [to that land], those
278b beings will be spontaneously born by transformation, seated with legs crossed, in the seven-jeweled lotus flowers, and instantly attain the same glorious forms, wisdom, and virtue as those of the bodhisattvas there.

44 "Further, Maitreya, if great bodhisattvas in the buddha lands[22] of other directions desire to see Amitāyus, and revere and make offerings to him and the hosts of bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka*s, they will, after death, be born in the land of Amitāyus. Spontaneously transformed, they will be born from within the seven-jeweled lotus flowers.

"Maitreya, you should know that those born by transformation are possessed of supreme wisdom, while those in the embryonic state lack that wisdom and must pass five hundred years without being able to behold the Buddha, hear his teaching of the Dharma, see the hosts of bodhisattvas and *śrāvakas*, make offerings to the Buddha, learn the rules of conduct for bodhisattvas, or

perform meritorious practices. You should know that this is because those beings harbored doubt and lacked wisdom in their previous lives."

45 The Buddha said to Maitreya, "Let us suppose that a wheel-turning monarch has a special chamber that is adorned with the seven kinds of jewels and provided with curtained couches and silken banners hanging from the ceiling. If princes have committed an offense against the king, they are taken to that chamber and fettered with gold chains. There they are served with food and drink and provided with clothes, couches and cushions, flowers and incense; and they can enjoy music. Being treated just like the wheel-turning monarch himself, they have no wants. Do you think that those princes would enjoy living there?"

"No, they would not," replied Maitreya. "They would seek various means of approach to ask a person of power to help them escape."

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "Those beings born within the lotus buds are like that. Because of their doubt of the Buddha's wisdom they have been born in palaces. Although they receive no punishment or ill treatment even for a single moment, they must pass five hundred years there without being able to see the Three Treasures, make offerings to the Buddha, or cultivate a store of virtue. This is distressing to them. Though there are other pleasures, they do not enjoy living there.

"If those beings become aware of the faults committed in their former lives and deeply repent, they can, as they wish, leave and go to where Amitāyus dwells. Then they can worship and make offerings to him; they can also visit innumerable and countless other tathāgatas to perform various meritorious practices. Maitreya, you should know that the bodhisattvas who allow doubt to arise lose great benefits. For this reason, you should have resolute faith in the supreme wisdom of the Buddha."

46 Bodhisattva Maitreya said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, how many non-retrogressive bodhisattvas are there in this world who will be born in that buddha land?"

The Buddha replied, "Sixty-seven *koṭi*s of non-retrogressive bodhisattvas from this world will be born there. Each of these bodhisattvas has previously made offerings to innumerable buddhas with almost as much diligence as you 278c

did, Maitreya. Furthermore, bodhisattvas of lesser practices and those who have performed small acts of merit, whose number is beyond calculation, will all be born there."

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "Not only those bodhisattvas from this world but also those from buddha lands in other directions are born there. First, in the land of the buddha named Far-reaching Illumination there are one hundred and eighty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Second, in the land of Buddha Jewel Storehouse there are ninety *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Third, in the land of Buddha Immeasurable Sound there are two hundred and twenty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Fourth, in the land of Buddha Taste of Nectar there are two hundred and fifty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Fifth, in the land of Buddha Dragon Subduing there are fourteen *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Sixth, in the land of Buddha Superior Power there are fourteen thousand bodhisattvas who all visit there. Seventh, in the land of Buddha Siṃha there are five hundred *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Eighth, in the land of Buddha Undefiled Light there are eighty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Ninth, in the land of Buddha Peak of Virtue there are sixty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Tenth, in the land of Buddha Mountain of Excellent Virtue there are sixty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Eleventh, in the land of Buddha King of Humans there are ten *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas who all visit there. Twelfth, in the land of Buddha Splendid Flower there are innumerable and incalculable bodhisattvas who are all non-retrogressive and possessed of unrivaled wisdom, who have previously made offerings to countless buddhas, and are able to learn in seven days the adamantine teachings of the Dharma that can only be attained by *mahāsattva*s after practicing for a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s. Those bodhisattvas all visit there. Thirteenth, in the land of Buddha Fearlessness there are seven hundred and ninety *koṭi*s of great bodhisattvas and incalculable minor bodhisattvas and *bhikṣu*s who all visit there."

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "Not only do the bodhisattvas from those fourteen buddha lands[23] visit that land, but also bodhisattvas from innumerable buddha lands in the ten directions, whose number is incalculable. Even if I were to give you only the names of the buddhas in the ten directions and the number of the bodhisattvas and *bhikṣu*s who visit that land, enumerating

them continuously day and night for a *kalpa,* I would not be able to complete the list. This is why I have given you only a brief description."

47 The Buddha said to Maitreya, "If there are people who hear the Name of 279a
that buddha, rejoice so greatly as to dance, and think of him even once, then you should know that they have gained great benefit by receiving unsurpassed virtue. For this reason, Maitreya, even if a great fire were to fill the universe of a thousand million worlds, you should pass through it to hear this sutra, to arouse joyful faith, to uphold and chant it, and to practice in accordance with its teachings. This is because there are many bodhisattvas who wish to hear this teaching but are still unable to do so. If there are sentient beings who have heard it, they will attain the stage of non-retrogression for realizing the highest enlightenment. This is why you should singleheartedly accept in faith, uphold, and chant this sutra, and practice in accordance with its teachings."

The Buddha further said, "I have expounded this teaching for the sake of sentient beings and enabled you to see Amitāyus and all in his land. Strive to do what you should. After I have passed into nirvana, do not allow doubt to arise. In the future, the Buddhist scriptures and teachings will perish. But, out of pity and compassion, I will especially preserve this sutra and maintain it in the world for a hundred years more. Those beings who encounter it will attain deliverance in accord with their aspirations."

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "It is difficult to encounter and behold a tathāgata when he is in this world. Difficult to access, difficult to hear are the buddhas' teachings and scriptures. It is also difficult to hear the excellent teachings for bodhisattvas, the *pāramitā*s. Difficult too is it to meet a good teacher, to hear the Dharma, and perform the practices. But most difficult of all difficulties is to hear this sutra, have faith in it with joy, and hold fast to it. Nothing is more difficult than this. Thus have I formed my Dharma, thus have I expounded my Dharma, thus have I taught my Dharma. You must receive it and practice it by the method prescribed."

48 When the World-honored One had finished his presentation of this sutra, aspiration for highest enlightenment was awakened in innumerable sentient beings. Twelve thousand *nayuta*s of human beings attained the pure Dharma eye; twenty-two *koṭi*s of *deva*s and humans attained the stage of non-returner

(*anāgāmin*); eight hundred thousand *bhikṣu*s realized the wisdom of destroying defilements; forty *koṭi*s of bodhisattvas attained the stage of non-retrogression; and all, adorned with the virtue of the universal vows, will ultimately attain perfect enlightenment.

At that time the entire universe of a thousand million worlds quaked in six ways, and a great light illuminated all the lands in the ten directions. A hundred thousand kinds of music played spontaneously, and innumerable marvelous flowers fell in profusion from the sky.

When the Buddha finished delivering this sutra, Bodhisattva Maitreya and bodhisattvas from the lands in the ten directions, together with Elder Ānanda, other great *śrāvaka*s, and all those in the assembly, without exception, rejoiced at the Buddha's discourse.

End of Part Two of the *Sutra on the Buddha of Infinite Life Delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha*

THE SUTRA ON THE VISUALIZATION OF THE BUDDHA OF INFINITE LIFE DELIVERED BY ŚĀKYAMUNI BUDDHA

Translated into Chinese during the Liu-Song Dynasty
by Tripiṭaka Master Kālayaśas[24] of Central Asia

1 Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying on Vulture Peak in Rājagṛha with a great assembly of twelve hundred and fifty monks. He 341a
was also accompanied by thirty-two thousand bodhisattvas led by Mañjuśrī, the Dharma Prince.

2 At that time, in the great city of Rājagṛha, there was a prince named Ajātaśatru. Instigated by his wicked friend Devadatta, he seized his father, King Bimbisāra, confined him in a room with walls seven deep, and forbade all the court officials to visit the king.

Vaidehī, the king's consort, was devoted to him. After having bathed and cleansed herself, she spread over her body ghee and honey mixed to a paste with wheat flour, filled her ornaments with grape juice, and secretly offered this food and drink to the king. He ate the flour paste, drank the juice, and then asked for water. Having rinsed his mouth, he joined his palms in reverence and, facing Vulture Peak, worshiped the World-honored One from afar, and said, "Mahāmaudgalyāyana is my close friend. I beseech you to have pity on me and send him here to give me the eight precepts."

Then Mahāmaudgalyāyana flew as swiftly as a hawk to the king. Day after day he came like this to give the king the eight precepts. The World-honored One also sent Venerable Pūrṇa to the palace to expound the Dharma to the king. Three weeks passed in this way. Because he had eaten the flour paste and heard the Dharma, he appeared peaceful and contented.

3 Then Ajātaśatru asked the guard, "Is my father still alive?"

The guard replied, "Great King, his consort spreads flour paste over her body, fills her ornaments with grape juice, and offers these to the king. The monks Mahāmaudgalyāyana and Pūrṇa come here through the air to expound the Dharma to him. It is impossible to stop them."

Hearing this, Ajātaśatru became furious with his mother and said, "Because you are an accomplice of that enemy, Mother, you too are an enemy. Those monks are evil, for with their delusive magic they have kept this wicked king alive for many days." So saying, he drew his sharp sword, intending to kill her.

At that time the king had a minister named Candraprabha who was intelligent and wise. Together with Jīvaka he made obeisances to the king and

said, "Great King, according to a certain Vedic scripture,[25] since the beginning of this cosmic period there have been eighteen thousand wicked kings who have killed their fathers out of their desire to usurp the throne, but we have never heard of anyone who has committed the outrage of killing his mother. Your Majesty, if you commit such an outrage, you will bring disgrace upon the *kṣatriya* class. As your ministers, we cannot bear to hear what people will say. As this would be the act of an outcaste, we could no longer remain here."

Having spoken these words, the two ministers grasped their swords and stepped back. Agitated and frightened, Ajātaśatru said to Jīvaka, "Are you not on my side?"

Jīvaka replied, "Your Majesty, please restrain yourself and do not kill your mother."

Hearing this, the king repented and begged their forgiveness. Having
341b thrown away his sword, he stopped short of killing his mother and instead
ordered the court officials to lock her up in an inner chamber and not allow her to leave.

4 Vaidehī, thus confined, grew emaciated with grief and despair. Facing Vulture Peak, she worshiped the Buddha from afar and said, "O Tathāgata, World-honored One, you used to send Ānanda to comfort me. Now I am in deep sorrow and distress. Since there is no way of my coming to look upon your august countenance, World-honored One, I pray you send Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana and Venerable Ānanda here to see me."

When she had said these words, tears of sorrow streamed down her cheeks like rain. Then she bowed toward the Buddha in the distance. Even before she raised her head, the World-honored One, who was then staying on Vulture Peak,[26] knew Vaidehī's thoughts and immediately ordered Mahāmaudgalyāyana and Ānanda to go to her through the air; he himself disappeared from the mountain and reappeared in the inner chamber of the royal palace.

After worshiping him, Vaidehī raised her head and saw Śākyamuni Buddha, the World-honored One. He was the color of purple-gold and was seated upon a lotus flower of a hundred jewels. He was attended by Mahāmaudgalyāyana on his left and Ānanda on his right. Śakra, Brahmā, the guardian gods of the world, and other *deva*s were in the air about him. Scattering heavenly blossoms like rain, they paid homage to the Buddha.

When she saw the World-honored One, Vaidehī tore off her ornaments and prostrated herself on the ground. Weeping bitterly, she said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, what bad karma did I commit in former lives that I have given birth to such an evil son? I wonder, World-honored One, what karmic relations could have made you a relative of Devadatta?

5 "I beseech you, World-honored One, to reveal to me a land of no sorrow and no affliction where I can be reborn. I do not wish to live in this defiled and evil world of Jambudvīpa where there are hells, realms of hungry ghosts, animals, and many vile beings. I wish that in the future I shall not hear evil words or see wicked people. World-honored One, I now kneel down to repent and beg you to take pity on me. I entreat you, O sunlike Buddha, to teach me how to visualize a land of pure karmic perfection."

Then the World-honored One sent forth from between his eyebrows a flood of light that was the color of gold and illuminated the innumerable worlds in the ten directions. Returning to the Buddha, the light settled on his head and transformed itself into a golden platform resembling Mount Sumeru. On the platform appeared the pure and resplendent lands of all the buddhas in the ten directions. Some of these lands were made of the seven kinds of jewels, some solely of lotus flowers; some resembled the palace in the Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others, while some were like a crystal mirror in which all the lands in the ten directions were reflected. Innumerable buddha lands like these, glorious and beautiful, were displayed to her.

Vaidehī then said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, these buddha lands are pure and free of defilement, and all of them are resplendent. But I wish to be born in the Land of Utmost Bliss of Amitāyus. I beseech you, World-
honored One, to teach me how to contemplate that land and attain *samādhi*." 341c

6 The World-honored One smiled, and from his mouth came five-colored rays of light, each shining on King Bimbisāra's head. Although the old king was confined, with his unhindered mind's eye he saw the World-honored One in the distance. He knelt down in homage to the Buddha and effortlessly made spiritual progress until he reached the stage of non-returner.

7 Then the World-honored One said to Vaidehī, "Do you know that Amitāyus is not far away? Fix your thoughts upon and contemplate that buddha land.

Then you will accomplish the pure acts.[27] I shall describe it to you in detail with various illustrations, so that all ordinary people in the future who wish to practice pure karma may also be born in that Western Land of Utmost Bliss. Whoever wishes to be born there should practice the three acts: first, caring for one's parents, attending to one's teachers and elders, compassionately refraining from killing, and doing the ten good deeds; second, taking the Three Refuges, keeping the various precepts, and refraining from breaking the rules of conduct; and third, awakening aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), believing deeply in the law of causality, chanting the Mahayana sutras, and encouraging people to follow their teachings. These three are called pure karma."

The Buddha further said to Vaidehī, "Do you know that these three acts are the pure karma practiced by all the buddhas of the past, present, and future as the right cause of enlightenment?"

8 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Listen carefully, listen carefully and ponder deeply. I, the Tathāgata, shall discourse on pure karma for the sake of all sentient beings of the future who are afflicted by the enemy, evil passions. It is very good, Vaidehī, that you have willingly asked me about this. Ānanda, you must receive and keep the Buddha's words and widely proclaim them to the multitude of beings. I, the Tathāgata, shall now teach you, Vaidehī, and all sentient beings of the future how to visualize the Western Land of Utmost Bliss. By the power of the Buddha all will be able to see the Pure Land as clearly as if one were looking at one's own reflection in a bright mirror. Seeing the utmost beauty and bliss of that land, they will rejoice and immediately attain insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s."

The Buddha said to Vaidehī, "You are unenlightened and so your spiritual powers are weak and obscured. Since you have not yet attained the divine eye, you cannot see that which is distant. But the buddha tathāgatas have special ways to enable you to see afar."

Vaidehī said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, through the Buddha's power, even I have now been able to see that land. But after the Buddha's passing sentient beings will become defiled and evil and be oppressed by the five kinds of suffering. How then will those beings be able to see the Land of Utmost Bliss of Amitāyus?"

9 The Buddha said to Vaidehī, "You and other sentient beings should concentrate and, with one-pointed attention, turn your thoughts westward. How do you contemplate? All sentient beings except those born blind—that is, all those with the faculty of sight—should look at the setting sun. Sit in the 342a
proper posture, facing west. Clearly gaze at the sun, with mind firmly fixed on it; concentrate your sight and do not let it wander from the setting sun, which is like a drum suspended above the horizon. Having done so, you should then be able to visualize it clearly, whether your eyes are open or closed. This is the visualization of the sun and is known as the first contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

10 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "After you have accomplished the first contemplation, next practice the visualization of water. Envision the western direction as entirely flooded by water. Then picture the water as clear and pure, and let this vision be distinctly perceived. Keep your thoughts from being distracted. After you have visualized the water, envision it becoming frozen. After you have visualized the ice as transparent to its depth, see it turning into beryl. When you have attained this vision, next imagine that the beryl ground shines brilliantly, inside and out, and that this ground is supported from below by columns that are made of diamond and the seven kinds of jewels and hung with golden banners. These columns have eight sides and eight corners, each side being adorned with a hundred kinds of jewels. Each jewel emits a thousand rays of light, each ray in turn having eighty-four thousand colors. As they are reflected on the beryl ground, they look like a thousand *koṭi*s of suns, so dazzling that it is impossible to see them in detail.

"On this beryl ground, golden paths intercross like a net of cords. The land is divided into areas made of one or the other of the seven jewels, so the partitions are quite distinct. Each jewel emits a flood of light in five hundred colors. The light appears in the shape of a flower or a star or the moon; suspended in the sky, it turns into a platform of light on which there are ten million pavilions made of a hundred kinds of jewels. Both sides of this platform are adorned with a hundred *koṭi*s of flowered banners and innumerable musical instruments. As eight pure breezes arise from the light and play the musical instruments, they proclaim the truths of suffering, emptiness, impermanence, and no-self. This is the visualization of the water and is known as the second contemplation.

11 "When you have attained this contemplation, visualize each object quite clearly without losing the image, whether your eyes are closed or open. Except when sleeping,[28] always keep it in mind. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "When the visualization of the water has been accomplished, it is called the general perception of the ground of the Land of Utmost Bliss. If you attain a state of *samādhi,* you will see this ground so clearly and distinctly that it will be impossible to describe it in detail. This is the visualization of the ground and is known as the third contemplation."

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "Keep these words of the Buddha in mind, and expound this method of visualizing the ground for the benefit of the multitude of future beings who will seek liberation from suffering. If one has attained a vision of the ground of that land, the evil karma that would bind one to birth and death for eighty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s[29] will be extinguished, and so one will certainly be born in the Pure Land in the next life. Do not doubt this. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to prac-
342b tice otherwise is incorrect."

12 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "When you have accomplished visualization of the ground, next contemplate the jeweled trees. This is how to do so. Visualize each one and then form an image of seven rows of trees, each being eight thousand *yojana*s high and adorned with seven-jeweled blossoms and leaves. Each blossom and leaf has the colors of various jewels. From the beryl-colored blossoms and leaves issues forth a golden light. From the crystal-colored [blossoms and leaves] issues forth a crimson light. From the agate-colored [blossoms and leaves] issues forth a sapphire light. From the sapphire-colored [blossoms and leaves] issues forth a green pearl light. Coral, amber, and all the other jewels serve as illuminating ornaments. Splendid nets of pearls cover the trees. Between these seven rows of nets covering each tree there are five hundred *koṭi*s of palaces adorned with exquisite flowers, like the palace of the Brahmā king, where celestial children naturally dwell. Each of these children wears ornaments made of five hundred *koṭi*s of *śakra-abhilagna-maṇi*-gems, which light up a hundred *yojana*s in all directions, like a hundred *koṭi*s of suns and moons shining together, and

so it is impossible to describe them in detail. Manifold jewels intermingle, producing the most beautiful colors.

"Rows of these jeweled trees are evenly arranged and their leaves are equally spaced. From among the leaves appear wonderful blossoms which spontaneously bear fruits of the seven kinds of jewels. Each leaf is twenty-five *yojana*s in both length and breadth. Like the celestial ornaments, the leaves are of a thousand colors and a hundred patterns. These trees have marvelous blossoms which are the color of gold from the Jambu River and spin like firewheels among the leaves. From these blossoms appear various fruits, as from Śakra's vase, and from the fruits issue forth great floods of light which transform themselves into banners and innumerable jeweled canopies. Inside the jeweled canopies can be seen reflections of all the activities of the Buddha throughout the universe of a thousand million worlds. The buddha lands in the ten directions are also reflected in them.

"After you have seen these trees, visualize each detail in order: the trunks, branches, leaves, blossoms, and fruits, and let your vision of all of them be clear and distinct. This is the visualization of the trees and is known as the fourth contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

13 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "When you have accomplished visualization of the trees, next contemplate the ponds.[30] This is how to do so. In the Land of Utmost Bliss, there are ponds of water possessing the eight excellent qualities, each made of the seven kinds of jewels that are soft and pliable. The water, springing from a wish-fulfilling king *maṇi*-gem, forms fourteen streams. Each stream is the color of the seven kinds of jewels. Its banks are made of gold and its bed is strewn with diamond sand of many colors. In each stream there are sixty *koṭi*s of lotus flowers of the seven kinds of jewels, which are round and symmetrical, measuring twelve *yojana*s in diameter. The water from the *maṇi*-gem flows among the flowers and meanders between the trees. As it ripples it produces exquisite sounds, which pro- 342c
claim the truths of suffering, emptiness, impermanence, and no-self, and of the *pāramitā*s. Its sound also praises the physical characteristics and marks of the buddhas. The wish-fulfilling king *maṇi*-gem emits a splendid golden light, which transforms itself into birds with the colors of a hundred jewels.

Their songs are melodious and elegant, constantly praising the virtue of mindfulness of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This is the visualization of the water possessing the eight excellent qualities and is known as the fifth contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

14 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "In each region of this jeweled land there are five hundred *koṭi*s of jeweled pavilions in which innumerable *deva*s play heavenly music. There are also musical instruments suspended in the sky, which, like those on the heavenly jeweled banners,[31] spontaneously produce tones even without a player. Each tone proclaims the virtue of mindfulness of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. When this contemplation has been accomplished, it is known as the general perception of the jeweled trees, jeweled ground, and jeweled ponds of the Land of Utmost Bliss. This is a composite visualization and is called the sixth contemplation.

"Those who have perceived these objects will be rid of extremely heavy evil karma which they have committed during innumerable *kalpa*s and will certainly, after death, be born in that land. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

15 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Listen carefully, listen carefully and ponder deeply. I will expound for you the method of removing suffering. Bear my words in mind and explain them to the multitude of beings."

When these words were spoken, Amitāyus appeared in the air above, attended on his left and right by the two *mahāsattva*s Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. So brilliant was their radiance that it was impossible to see them in detail. They could not be compared even with a hundred thousand nuggets of gold from the Jambu River.

After she had this vision of Amitāyus, Vaidehī knelt down in worship at Śākyamuni's feet and said to him, "World-honored One, through your power I have been able to see Amitāyus and the two bodhisattvas, but how can sentient beings of the future see them?"

The Buddha said to Vaidehī, "Those who wish to see that Buddha should form an image of a lotus flower on the seven-jeweled ground. They visualize each petal of this flower as having the colors of a hundred kinds of jewels and eighty-four thousand veins like a celestial painting, with eighty-four

thousand rays of light issuing forth from each vein. They should visualize all of these clearly and distinctly. Its smaller petals are two hundred and fifty *yojana*s in both length and breadth. This lotus flower has eighty-four thousand large petals. Between the petals there are a hundred *koṭi*s of king *maṇi*-gems as illuminating adornments. Each *maṇi*-gem emits a thousand rays of light which, like canopies made of the seven kinds of jewels, cover the entire earth. 343a

"The dais is made of *śakra-abhilagna-maṇi*-gems and is decorated with eighty thousand diamonds, *kiṃśuka*-gems, *brahma-maṇi*-gems, and also with exquisite pearl nets. On the dais four columns with jeweled banners spontaneously arise, each appearing to be as large as a thousand million *koṭi*s of Mount Sumerus. On the columns rest a jeweled canopy similar to that in the palace of the Yāma Heaven. It is also adorned with five hundred *koṭi*s of excellent gems, each emitting eighty-four thousand rays shining in eighty-four thousand different tints of golden color. Each golden light suffuses this jeweled land and transforms itself everywhere into various forms, such as diamond platforms, nets of pearls, and nebulous clusters of flowers. In all the ten directions it transforms itself into anything according to one's wishes and performs the activities of the Buddha. This is the visualization of the lotus throne and is known as the seventh contemplation."

The Buddha further said to Ānanda, "This majestic lotus flower was originally produced by the power of Bhikṣu Dharmākara's [Original] Vow. Those who wish to see Buddha Amitāyus should first practice this contemplation of the flower throne. In doing so, do not contemplate in a disorderly way. Visualize the objects one by one—each petal, each gem, each ray of light, each dais, and each column. *See* all of these as clearly and distinctly as if you were looking at your own image in a mirror. When this contemplation is accomplished, the evil karma that would bind you to birth and death for five hundred *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s will be extinguished, and you will certainly be born in the Land of Utmost Bliss. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

16 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "After you have seen this, next visualize the Buddha. Why the Buddha? Because buddha tathāgatas have cosmic bodies,[32] and so enter into the meditating mind of each sentient being. For this reason, when you contemplate a buddha, your mind itself takes the

form of his thirty-two physical characteristics and eighty secondary marks. Your mind produces the Buddha's image and is itself the Buddha.[33] The ocean of perfectly and universally enlightened buddhas thus arises in the meditating mind. For this reason, you should singlemindedly concentrate and deeply contemplate the Buddha Tathāgata, Arhat, and Perfectly Enlightened One.

"When you visualize the Buddha, you should first form his image. Whether your eyes are open or closed, perceive a jeweled image of him, who is the color of gold from the Jambu River, sitting on that flower throne. When you have thus perceived a seated image of the Buddha, your mind's eye will open and you will clearly and distinctly see the seven-jeweled glorious objects of the Land of Utmost Bliss, including the seven-jeweled ground, the jeweled ponds, the rows of jeweled trees covered with heavenly jeweled curtains, and jeweled nets spreading over the sky. Perceive these as clearly and distinctly as if you were seeing an object in the palm of your hand.

"After you have seen this image, visualize on the Buddha's left a large
343b lotus flower which is exactly the same as the one described above, and then another large one on his right. Visualize an image of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara sitting on the flower seat on his left, sending forth a golden light just like the buddha image described above, and then an image of Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta sitting on the flower seat on his right.

"When you have attained this vision, you will see these images of the Buddha and bodhisattvas sending forth golden rays, which illuminate the jeweled trees. Under each tree there are also three lotus flowers with images of a buddha and two bodhisattvas sitting on them, so that the land is completely filled with such images.

When you have attained this vision, you will perceive the streams, rays of light, jeweled trees, ducks, geese, male and female mandarin ducks, and so forth, all expounding the wonderful Dharma. Whether in meditation or not, you will always hear the wonderful Dharma. When you rise from meditation you should remember what you have heard, not forget it, and confirm it with the sutras. If it does not agree with the sutras it should be called an illusion, but if it does agree it is called the attainment of the general perception of the Land of Utmost Bliss. This is the visualization of the buddha image, and is known as the eighth contemplation. If you have attained this, the evil karma that would bind you to birth and death for innumerable *koṭi*s

of *kalpa*s will be extinguished and, while in this life, you will attain the buddha-recollection *samādhi.* To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

17 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "After you have succeeded in seeing these images, next envision the physical characteristics and the light of Amitāyus. Ānanda, you should realize that his body is as glorious as a thousand million *koṭi*s of nuggets of gold from the Jambu River of the Yāma Heaven and that his height is six hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of *yojana*s multiplied by the number of the sands of the Ganges River. The white tuft of hair curling to the right between his eyebrows is five times as big as Mount Sumeru. His eyes are clear and as broad as the four great oceans; their blue irises and whites are distinct. From all the pores of his body issues forth a flood of light as magnificent as Mount Sumeru. His aureole is as broad as a hundred *koṭi*s of universes, each containing a thousand million worlds. In this aureole reside transformed buddhas numbering as many as a million *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s multiplied by the number of the sands of the Ganges River. Each buddha is attended by innumerable and countless transformed bodhisattvas.

"Buddha Amitāyus possesses eighty-four thousand physical characteristics, each having eighty-four thousand secondary marks of excellence. Each secondary mark emits eighty-four thousand rays of light; each ray of light shines universally upon the lands of the ten directions, embracing and not forsaking those who are mindful of the Buddha. It is impossible to describe in detail these rays of light, physical characteristics, and marks, transformed buddhas, and so forth. But you can see them clearly with your mind's eye through contemplation.

"Those who have envisioned them see all the buddhas of the ten directions. Because they see the buddhas, this is called the buddha-recollection *samādhi.* To attain this contemplation is to perceive the bodies of all the buddhas. By perceiving these, one also realizes the buddhas' mind. The 343c
buddhas' mind is great compassion. It embraces sentient beings with unconditional benevolence. Those who have practiced this contemplation will, after death, be born in the presence of the buddhas and realize insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s. For this reason, the wise should concentrate their thoughts and visualize Amitāyus.

"In contemplating him, begin with one of his physical characteristics. Visualize first the white tuft of hair between his eyebrows until you see it quite clearly and distinctly. When you visualize it, all the eighty-four thousand physical characteristics will spontaneously become manifest. When you see Amitāyus you will also see innumerable buddhas of the ten directions. Having visualized these innumerable buddhas you will receive from each the prediction of your future buddhahood. This is the general perception of all the physical characteristics of the Buddha and is known as the ninth contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

18 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "After you have seen Amitāyus clearly and distinctly, next visualize Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. His height is eighty *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of *yojana*s multiplied by the number of the sands of the Ganges River. His body is the color of purple-gold, and on the top of his head is a mound surrounded by an aureole with a radius of a hundred thousand *yojana*s, in which there are five hundred transformed buddhas. Each transformed buddha resembles Śākyamuni and is attended by five hundred transformed bodhisattvas and innumerable *deva*s. In the light emanating from his entire body are seen the sentient beings of the five realms of samsara in all their distinct physical forms. On his head he wears a heavenly crown made of *śakra-abhilagna-maṇi*-gems, on which stands a transformed buddha (Amitāyus) measuring twenty-five *yojana*s in height.

"The face of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is the color of gold from the Jambu River, while the tuft of hair between his eyebrows has the colors of the seven kinds of jewels, and from it issue forth eighty-four thousand different rays of light. In each of these rays dwell innumerable and countless hundreds of thousands of transformed buddhas, each attended by countless transformed bodhisattvas, all of whom manifest in various forms at will, filling completely the worlds of the ten directions. Avalokiteśvara's arms are the color of red lotus flowers. They emit eighty *koṭi*s of exquisite rays of
344a light in the shape of ornaments, in which are reflected all the glorious objects of that land. The palms of his hands are the color of five hundred *koṭi*s of various lotus flowers. Each of his ten fingertips bears eighty-four thousand signs like impressed patterns, each with eighty-four thousand colors. Each

color in turn emits eighty-four thousand delicate rays of light, illuminating all beings. With his jeweled hands he welcomes and guides sentient beings.

"When he lifts one of his feet, the mark of a thousand-spoked wheel on its sole spontaneously changes into a pedestal, which emits five hundred *koṭi*s of light rays. When he puts his foot down, flowers made of diamond and *maṇi*-gems scatter, covering everywhere. All the other physical characteristics and marks that he fully possesses are the same as the Buddha's, except for the mound on his head and the uppermost, invisible part,[34] which are not equal to those of the World-honored One. This is the visualization of the true physical features of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and is known as the tenth contemplation."

Then the Buddha said to Ānanda, "Those who wish to see Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara should follow the method of contemplation just mentioned. Those who practice this contemplation will not encounter any misfortune but will be freed from karmic hindrances and rid of the evil karma that would bind them to birth and death for innumerable *kalpa*s. If you only hear the name of this bodhisattva, you will obtain immeasurable merit. And so, how much more merit will you acquire if you clearly visualize him! Those who wish to see Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara should first envision the mound on his head and next his heavenly crown. Then they should visualize the other physical characteristics in order, as clearly as if they were looking at something in the palm of their hand. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

19 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Next visualize Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta. The dimensions of this bodhisattva are the same as those of Avalokiteśvara. His aureole, two hundred and twenty-five *yojana*s in diameter, shines to a distance of two hundred and fifty *yojana*s. The light emanating from his entire body illuminates the worlds of the ten directions, making them shine like purple-gold. This light can be seen by anyone who has a close karmic relationship with him. Even if one sees the light emanating from only one pore of his skin, one can perceive the pure and glorious lights of the innumerable buddhas of the ten directions. That is why this bodhisattva is called Boundless Light. Furthermore, he has great power to illumine all beings with the light of wisdom in order to deliver them from

the three evil realms. It is for this reason that he is also called Possessed of Great Power.

"The heavenly crown of this bodhisattva is adorned with five hundred jeweled lotus flowers, each having five hundred jeweled pedestals. On each pedestal appear the pure and resplendent lands of the buddhas in the ten directions with all their boundless and glorious features.

"The mound on his head, shaped like a lotus bud, has a jeweled vase in front. This is suffused with various lights which reveal all the activities of
344b the Buddha. The rest of the characteristics of his body are exactly the same as Avalokiteśvara's. When this bodhisattva walks all the worlds in the ten directions quake. Wherever the earth trembles, five hundred *koṭi*s of jeweled flowers appear, each as beautiful and brilliant as a flower in the Land of Utmost Bliss. When this bodhisattva sits down all the seven-jeweled lands, from the land of Buddha Golden Light in the nadir to that of Buddha King of Light in the zenith, tremble simultaneously. From between these, manifested bodies of Amitāyus, Avalokiteśvara, and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, as innumerable as particles of dust, all assemble like clouds in the Land of Utmost Bliss, filling the entire sky. Sitting on lotus seats, they expound the wonderful Dharma to save suffering beings. To visualize thus is known as the contemplation of Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta, and is also called the contemplation of Mahāsthāmaprāpta's physical characteristics. To visualize that bodhisattva in this way is known as the eleventh contemplation. It extinguishes the evil karma that would bind one to birth and death for immeasurable and countless *kalpa*s. Those who practice this contemplation will no longer be subject to birth from the womb. They can journey to the pure and exquisite lands of the buddhas. These contemplations are known as the complete contemplations of Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

20 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "After you have contemplated thus, next visualize yourself as born in the Western Land of Utmost Bliss sitting cross-legged upon a lotus flower. Visualize this lotus flower as closed; as it opens, five hundred rays of colored light illuminate your body; then your eyes open and you see buddhas and bodhisattvas filling the sky and hear the sounds of the water, birds, and trees, and the voices of the buddhas all expounding the wonderful Dharma in accord with the twelve divisions

of the scriptures. When you rise from meditation, keep those things in mind and do not forget them. Seeing them thus is known as the visualization of the Land of Utmost Bliss of Buddha Amitāyus. This is the comprehensive visualization and is known as the twelfth contemplation.

"Innumerable transformed bodies of Amitāyus, together with those of Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, will always accompany those who contemplate thus. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

21 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "If you sincerely desire to be born in the Western Land, you should first picture a figure, sixteen feet tall, on the surface of a pond. The dimensions of Amitāyus as previously described are boundless and beyond the mental scope of ordinary beings. But by the power of the Original Vows of that tathāgata, those who contemplate him will certainly succeed. You can acquire immeasurable merit simply by visualizing an image of that buddha. And so, how much more merit will you acquire by visualizing his complete physical characteristics!

"Amitāyus, exercising supernatural powers at will, can freely manifest 344c
his various forms in the lands of the ten directions. At times he may appear as a large figure, filling the whole sky; at other times as a smaller figure, only sixteen or eight feet high. The figures that he manifests are all of the color of pure gold. The transformed buddhas and jeweled lotus flowers in the aureole of each manifested form are like those described above.

"Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta have a similar appearance, wherever they are. Sentient beings can only tell one from the other by looking at the emblems on their heads. These two bodhisattvas assist Amitāyus in saving all beings everywhere. This is the miscellaneous visualization, and is known as the thirteenth contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

22 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Those born in the Western Land are of nine grades. Those who attain birth on the highest level of the highest grade are sentient beings who resolve to be born in that land, awaken the three kinds of faith, and so are born there. What are the three [kinds of faith]? They are, first, sincere faith; second, deep faith; and third, the faith

that seeks birth there by transferring one's merit. Those who have these three kinds of faith will certainly be born there.

"There are three other kinds of sentient beings who also attain birth. Who are the three [other kinds of sentient beings]? They are, first, those who have a compassionate heart, abstain from killing, and observe the precepts; second, those who chant the Mahayana sutras of greater scope; and third, those who practice the six forms of mindfulness. They aspire to be born in that buddha land by transferring there the merit of practice. With the merit acquired from doing these acts for one to seven days, they attain birth.

"When an aspirant is about to be born in that land through dedicated and undaunted practices, Tathāgata Amitāyus arrives together with Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta, innumerable transformed buddhas, a great assembly of a hundred thousand monks and *śrāvaka*s, and innumerable *deva*s in seven-jeweled palaces. Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, carrying a *vajra* seat, together with Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta, approaches the aspirant. Amitāyus releases a great flood of light that illuminates the aspirant's body and, along with the bodhisattvas, extends his hands in welcome. Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, together with innumerable bodhisattvas, praise and encourage the aspirant. Seeing this, the aspirant rejoices so greatly as to dance. Then he sees himself sitting on the *vajra* seat, and, following the Buddha, is born into that land in the time it takes to snap one's fingers.

"After being born in that land, he sees the Buddha's body complete with
345a all its physical characteristics and also the bodies of the bodhisattvas equally complete with all their physical characteristics. Hearing the discourse on the wonderful Dharma sent forth by the light and the jeweled trees, he then reaches the insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s. In a single moment, he visits and worships all the buddhas of the ten directions and receives from each of them the prediction of his future buddhahood. Returning to the Pure Land, he is endowed with innumerable hundreds of thousands of *dhāraṇī*s. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the highest level of the highest grade.

23 "Those who attain birth on the middle level of the highest grade do not necessarily uphold and chant the sutras of greater scope, but they comprehend the teachings of the Buddha so well that when they hear the supreme truths they are not dismayed. They have deep faith in the law of karmic cause

and effect and do not slight the Mahayana. They transfer the merit acquired to the Land of Utmost Bliss, aspiring to be born there.

"When such an aspirant is about to die, Amitāyus appears before him, surrounded by Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta, and innumerable sages and attendants, carrying a purple-gold lotus seat. The Buddha praises him, saying, 'Son of the Dharma, because you have practiced the Mahayana and appreciate the supreme truths, I have come to welcome you.' So saying, he and a thousand transformed buddhas extend their hands all at once toward the aspirant, who, seeing himself sitting on the purple-gold seat, joins his palms[35] and praises the buddhas. In an instant, he is born in a seven-jeweled pond of that land.

"The purple-gold seat has become like a great jeweled flower, which opens after one night. The body of the aspirant has become the color of purple-gold and beneath his feet are seven-jeweled lotus flowers. The Buddha and bodhisattvas together release a flood of light that illuminates the aspirant's body. His eyes open, and because of the store of merit from his previous life, he hears voices everywhere expounding only the most profound and supreme truths. Descending from his golden seat, he bows with joined palms and praises the Buddha, the World-honored One. After seven days, he immediately reaches the stage of non-retrogression for realizing highest, perfect enlightenment. He is also able to fly in the ten directions, as he wishes, and to revere all the buddhas and learn various *samādhi*s from them. After the lapse of a smaller *kalpa,* he attains the insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s and receives from each buddha the prediction of his future buddhahood. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the middle level of the highest grade.

24 "Those who attain birth on the lowest level of the highest grade likewise accept the law of karmic cause and effect, do not speak slightingly of the Mahayana, and awaken aspiration for highest enlightenment. They transfer the merit acquired to the Land of Utmost Bliss, aspiring to be born there.

"When such an aspirant is about to die, Amitāyus, together with Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta, and a host of attendants, come to welcome him, bringing a golden lotus flower and manifesting five hundred transformed buddhas. Those transformed buddhas extend their hands all at once

and praise the aspirant, saying, 'Son of the Dharma, since you have awakened pure aspiration for highest enlightenment, we have come to welcome you.'

"When he has viewed all this, the aspirant finds himself seated upon a golden lotus flower, which then closes. Following the World-honored One,
345b he immediately attains birth on a seven-jeweled pond. After a day and night, the lotus flower opens and, within seven days, the aspirant beholds the Buddha. Although he sees the Buddha's body, he is still unable to discern his physical characteristics and marks clearly. But after three weeks he sees them distinctly, and also hears all the sounds and voices proclaiming the wonderful Dharma. Then he can travel in all the ten directions to make offerings to the buddhas and hear their profound teachings. After three smaller *kalpa*s he acquires clear understanding of the one hundred *dharma*s and dwells in the stage of joy. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the lowest level of the highest grade. These three together are known as the contemplation of the highest grade of aspirants, and the fourteenth contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

25 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Those who attain birth on the highest level of the middle grade are the sentient beings who keep the five precepts, observe the eight abstinences, practice in compliance with various precepts, and abstain from committing the five grave offenses and other transgressions. They transfer the merit acquired to the Western Land of Utmost Bliss, aspiring to be born there.

"When such a person is about to die, Amitāyus appears before him, surrounded by a host of monks and radiating a golden light. He then expounds the truth of suffering, emptiness, impermanence, and no-self, and praises renunciation of the world as the way to escape from suffering.

"Seeing this, the aspirant greatly rejoices and finds himself seated upon a lotus flower. He kneels down, joins his palms, and worships the Buddha. Before he raises his head he attains birth in the Land of Utmost Bliss, where his lotus bud soon opens. When the flower opens, he hears various sounds and voices extolling the Four Noble Truths. He immediately attains arhatship, acquires the three kinds of transcendent knowledge and the six supernatural powers, and realizes the eight *samādhi*s of liberation. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the highest level of the middle grade.

26 "Those who attain birth on the middle level of the middle grade are the sentient beings who observe for at least a day and a night the eight abstinences, the precepts for a novice, or the complete precepts of a monk or a nun, and do not violate any of the rules of conduct. They transfer the merit acquired to the Land of Utmost Bliss, aspiring to be born there.

"When such an aspirant, perfumed by the virtue of observing the precepts, is about to die, he sees Amitāyus coming toward him with his attendants, radiating a golden light and carrying a seven-jeweled lotus flower. He hears a voice in the sky above praising him, saying, 'Person of good deeds, since you are virtuous and have followed the teachings of the buddhas of the three periods, I have come to welcome you.' The aspirant finds himself seated upon the lotus flower. The flower having closed, the aspirant is born on a jeweled pond of the Western Land of Utmost Bliss. After seven days the lotus bud unfolds, and he then opens his eyes. With joined palms he pays homage to the World-honored One, rejoices at hearing the Dharma, and reaches the stage of stream-winner (*śrota-āpanna*). After half a *kalpa*, he becomes an arhat. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the middle level of the middle grade.

27 "Those who attain birth on the lowest level of the middle grade are good 345c
men and women who are dutiful to and care for their parents and do benevolent deeds for others. When such a person is about to die, he may meet a good teacher, who fully explains to him the bliss of the land of Amitāyus and the Forty-eight Great Vows of Bhikṣu Dharmākara. Having heard this, he dies; and in as short a time as it takes a strong man to bend and straighten his arm he attains birth in the Western Land of Utmost Bliss. Seven days after his birth there, he meets Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, rejoices at hearing the Dharma from them, and so reaches the stage of stream-winner. After one smaller *kalpa*, he becomes an arhat. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the lowest level of the middle grade. These three together are known as the contemplation of the middle grade of aspirants and the fifteenth contemplation. To practice in this way is called the correct contemplation, and to practice otherwise is incorrect."

28 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Those who attain birth on the highest level of the lowest grade are the sentient beings who commit

various evil acts but do not slander the Mahayana sutras of greater scope. When a foolish person such as this, who has committed much evil but feels no remorse, is about to die, he may meet a good teacher, who praises the titles of the twelve divisions of the Mahayana scriptures. By hearing these sutra titles, he is released from the burden of evil karma that would bind him to birth and death for a thousand *kalpa*s. Furthermore, this wise teacher advises him to join his palms and call, 'Homage to Amitāyus Buddha (*Na-mo-o-mi-tuo-fo*).' Calling the Name of the Buddha extinguishes the evil karma that would bind the dying person to birth and death for fifty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s.

"The Buddha then sends his transformed body and those of Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta to the aspirant; they praise him, saying, 'Well done, person of good deeds! By calling the Name of the Buddha your evil karma has been extinguished, and so we have come to welcome you.' When these words are uttered, the aspirant sees a flood of light from that transformed buddha fill his room. Having seen this, he rejoices and dies. Seated on a jeweled lotus flower, he follows the transformed buddha and is born on a jeweled pond. In seven weeks the lotus bud opens and the bodhisattva of great compassion, Avalokiteśvara, and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta appear before him, releasing great floods of light, and explain to him the extremely profound teachings of the twelve divisions of the scriptures. Having heard these, the aspirant accepts them in faith and awakens aspiration for highest enlightenment. After ten smaller *kalpa*s, he acquires clear understanding of the one hundred *dharma*s and enters the first stage of a bodhisattva. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the highest level of the lowest grade. Thus he is born by hearing the Name of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—that is, the Three Treasures."

29 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Those who attain birth on the middle level of the lowest grade are the sentient beings who violate the five precepts, the eight precepts, or the complete precepts of a monk or a nun. A foolish person such as this steals from the sangha, or takes the personal
346a belongings of monks, or preaches the Dharma with impure motives, but feels no remorse. Thus he defiles himself by evil karma[36] and because of this he is liable to fall into hell.

"When he is about to die and the flames of hell suddenly close in on him, he may meet a good teacher, who compassionately explains to him the

ten supernal powers of Amitāyus, fully describing the majestic power of the light of that buddha and his virtues in the observance of the precepts, meditation, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge of liberation. When he has heard this, the evil karma that would bind him to birth and death for eighty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s are extinguished; thus, the fierce flames of hell turn into cool and refreshing breezes, wafting heavenly flowers. On each flower is a transformed buddha accompanied by bodhisattvas welcoming him.

"In an instant, he attains birth within a lotus bud on a seven-jeweled pond. After six *kalpa*s the lotus bud opens, and then Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta comfort him with their noble voices and teach him profound Mahayana sutras. Upon hearing these, he immediately awakens aspiration for highest enlightenment. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the middle level of the lowest grade."

30 The Buddha said to Ānanda and Vaidehī, "Those who attain birth on the lowest level of the lowest grade are the sentient beings who commit such evils as the five grave offenses, the ten evil acts, and all kinds of immorality. Owing to such evil karma, a fool like this will fall into evil realms and suffer endless agony for many *kalpa*s. When he is about to die, he may meet a good teacher, who consoles him in various ways, teaching him the wonderful Dharma and urging him to be mindful of the Buddha; but he is too tormented by pain to do so. The good teacher then advises him, 'If you cannot concentrate on the Buddha then you should say instead, "Homage to Amitāyus Buddha."' In this way, he sincerely and continuously says, 'Homage to Amitāyus Buddha' (*Na-mo-o-mi-tuo-fo*) ten times. Because he calls the Buddha's Name, with each repetition the evil karma that would bind him to birth and death for eighty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s is extinguished. When he comes to die, he sees before him a golden lotus flower like the disk of the sun, and in an instant he is born within a lotus bud in the Land of Utmost Bliss. After twelve great *kalpa*s the lotus bud opens. When the flower opens, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta teach him with voices of great compassion the method of extinguishing evil karma through the realization of the suchness of all *dharma*s. Hearing this, he rejoices and immediately awakens aspiration for enlightenment. Such a person is called one who attains birth on the lowest level of the lowest grade. These three together are known as the contemplation of the lowest grade of aspirants and the sixteenth contemplation."

31 As the Buddha delivered these words, Vaidehī and her five hundred female attendants listened to his teaching. Having envisioned the boundless features of the Land of Utmost Bliss, of Buddha [Amitāyus], and of the two bodhisattvas, Vaidehī rejoiced in her heart. Wonder-struck at this revelation, she
346b attained great awakening with clarity of mind and insight into the non-arising of all *dharmas*.[37] Her five hundred female attendants awakened aspiration for highest, perfect enlightenment and desired to be born in that land. The World-honored One gave them all assurances that they would be born there and that they would then gain the *samādhi* of being in the presence of all the buddhas. Innumerable *devas* also awakened aspiration for highest enlightenment.

32 Then Ānanda rose from his seat, stepped forward, and said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, what should we call this sutra and how should we receive and retain the essentials of its teaching?"

The Buddha answered, "Ānanda, this sutra is called the 'Visualization of the Land of Utmost Bliss of Buddha Amitāyus and of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta.' It is also called the 'Purification and Elimination of Karmic Hindrances for Attaining Birth in the Presence of All Buddhas.' Hold fast to this sutra and do not forget it. Those who practice this *samādhi* will be able to see, during their lifetime, Buddha Amitāyus and the two *mahāsattvas*. If good men or women simply hear the Name of this buddha or the names of those two bodhisattvas, the evil karma that would bind them to birth and death for innumerable *kalpas* will be extinguished. And so, how much more merit will they acquire if they concentrate on them! You should know that all who are mindful of that buddha are like white lotus flowers among humankind; Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta become their good friends. They will sit in the seat of enlightenment and be born into the family of the buddhas."

The Buddha further said to Ānanda, "Bear these words well in mind. To bear these words in mind means to hold fast to the Name of Buddha Amitāyus."

When the Buddha had spoken thus, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Venerable Ānanda, Vaidehī, and all the others greatly rejoiced to hear the Buddha's discourse.

33 Then the World-honored One returned to Vulture Peak through the air. There Ānanda fully explained to the assembly what had happened. Innumerable humans, *deva*s, *nāga*s, *yakṣa*s, and all other beings greatly rejoiced to hear the Buddha's teaching. Having worshiped the World-honored One, they departed.

End of *The Sutra on the Visualization of the Buddha of Infinite Life Delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha*

THE SUTRA ON AMITĀYUS BUDDHA DELIVERED BY ŚĀKYAMUNI BUDDHA

Translated into Chinese during the Yao-Qin Dynasty
by Tripiṭaka Master Kumārajīva of Kucha

1 Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in the Jeta Grove monastery of Anāthapiṇḍada's Garden at Śrāvastī, together with a large assembly of twelve hundred and fifty monks who were all great arhats well known to the people. Among them were great disciples such as the elders Śāriputra, 346c
Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Mahākāśyapa, Mahākātyāyana, Mahākauṣṭhila, Revata, Śuddhipanthaka, Nanda, Ānanda, Rāhula, Gavāṃpati, Piṇḍola-Bhāradvāja, Kālodayin, Mahākapphiṇa, Vakkula, and Aniruddha. He was also accompanied by many bodhisattva *mahāsattva*s, such as Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, Bodhisattva Ajita, Bodhisattva Sweet-smelling Elephant, and Bodhisattva Constant Endeavor, and by innumerable *deva*s, including Śakra, lord of the gods, and many others.

2 The Buddha then said to Elder Śāriputra: "If you travel westward from here, passing a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of buddha lands, you will come to the land called Utmost Bliss, where there is a buddha named Amitāyus.[38] He is living there now, teaching the Dharma.

3 "Śāriputra, why is that land called Utmost Bliss? The beings in that land suffer no pain but only enjoy pleasures of various kinds. For this reason, that land is called Utmost Bliss. Again, Śāriputra, in the Land of Utmost Bliss there are seven rows of balustrades, seven rows of decorative nets, and seven rows of trees. They are all made of four kinds of jewels and extend over the whole land, encompassing everything. For this reason, that land is called Utmost Bliss. Again, Śāriputra, in the Land of Utmost Bliss there are seven-jeweled ponds filled with water possessing the eight excellent qualities. The 347a
beds of the ponds are covered solely with gold sand, and from the four sides of each bed rise stairs of gold, silver, beryl, and crystal. Above these stand pavilions adorned with gold, silver, beryl, crystal, sapphire, rosy pearls, and cornelian. In the ponds are lotuses as large as chariot wheels—the blue ones radiating a blue light, the yellow a yellow light, the red a red light, and the white a white light. They are marvelous and beautiful, fragrant and pure. Śāriputra, the Land of Utmost Bliss is filled with such splendid adornments.

"Again, Śāriputra, in that buddha land heavenly music is played continually. The ground is made of gold. Six times during the day and night *māndārava* flowers rain down from the sky. Every day, in the serenity of

early morning, the people of that land fill the hems of their robes with exquisite flowers and go to make offerings to a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of buddhas dwelling in the worlds of all the other directions. Then they return to the Pure Land for their morning meal. After the meal they enjoy a stroll. Śāriputra, the Land of Utmost Bliss is filled with such splendid adornments.

"Again, Śāriputra, in that land there are always many kinds of rare and beautiful birds of various colors, such as white geese, peacocks, parrots, *śāri*s, *kalaviṅka*s, and *jīvaṃjīvaka*s. Six times during the day and night birds sing with melodious and delicate sounds, which proclaim such teachings as the five roots of good, the five powers, the seven practices leading to enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path. On hearing them, all the people of that land become mindful of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. But, Śāriputra, you should not assume that these birds are born as retribution for evil karma. The reason is that none of the three evil realms exists in that buddha land. Śāriputra, even the names of the three evil realms do not exist there; how much less the realms themselves! These birds are manifested by Amitāyus so that their singing can proclaim and spread the Dharma.

"In that buddha land, Śāriputra, when soft breezes waft through the rows of jeweled trees and jeweled nets they produce subtle, wonderful sounds. It is as if a hundred thousand musical instruments were playing together. Everyone who hears the sounds spontaneously becomes mindful of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Śāriputra, that buddha land is filled with such splendid adornments.

4 "For what reason, Śāriputra, do you think that buddha is called Amitābha? Śāriputra, the Buddha's light shines boundlessly and without hindrance over all the worlds of the ten directions. It is for this reason that he is called Amitābha. Again, Śāriputra, the lives of the Buddha and the people of his land last for innumerable, unlimited, and incalculable *kalpa*s. It is for this reason that the buddha is called Amitāyus. Śāriputra, ten *kalpa*s have passed since Amitāyus attained enlightenment. Moreover, Śāriputra, he has an
347b immeasurable and unlimited number of *śrāvaka* disciples, all of them arhats,
whose number cannot be reckoned by any means. His assembly of bodhisattvas is similarly vast. Śāriputra, that buddha land is filled with such splendid adornments.

5 "Again, Śāriputra, all sentient beings born in the Land of Utmost Bliss dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. Many of them are in the stage of becoming a buddha after one more life. Their number is so great that it is beyond reckoning; it can only be described as innumerable, unlimited, and incalculable.

"Śāriputra, those sentient beings who hear of that land should aspire to be born there. Why? Because they will be able to meet such sages of supreme virtue. Śāriputra, one cannot attain birth in that land with few roots of good or a small store of merit. Śāriputra, if a good man or woman who hears of Amitāyus holds fast to his Name even for one day, two days, three, four, five, six, or seven days with a concentrated and undistracted mind, then, at the hour of death, Amitāyus will appear with a host of holy ones. Consequently, when their life comes to an end, the aspirants' minds will not fall into confusion and so they will be born immediately in the Land of Utmost Bliss of Amitāyus. Śāriputra, perceiving these benefits, I say: All sentient beings who hear this teaching should aspire to birth in that land.

6 "Śāriputra, just as I praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitāyus, so do the buddhas in the eastern direction as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Akṣobhya Buddha,[39] Merudhvaja Buddha, Mahāmeru Buddha, Meruprabhāsa Buddha, and Mañjusvara Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled 'Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas.'

7 "Śāriputra, there are in the southern direction buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Candrasūryapradīpa Buddha, Yaśasprabha Buddha, Mahārciskandha Buddha, Merupradīpa Buddha, and Anantavīrya Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled 'Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas.'

8 "Śāriputra, there are in the western direction buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Amitāyus Buddha, Amitaketu Buddha, 347c

Amitadhvaja Buddha, Mahāprabha Buddha, Mahāprabhāsa Buddha, Ratnaketu Buddha, and Śuddharaśmiprabha Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled 'Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas.'

9 "Śāriputra, there are in the northern direction buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Arciskandha Buddha, Vaiśvānaranirghoṣa Buddha, Duṣpradharṣa Buddha, Ādityasaṃbhava Buddha, and Jālinīprabha Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled 'Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas.'

10 "Śāriputra, there are in the nadir buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Siṃha Buddha, Yaśas Buddha, Yaśasprabhāsa Buddha, Dharma Buddha, Dharmadhvaja Buddha, and Dharmadhara Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled 'Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas.'

11 "Śāriputra, there are in the zenith buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Brahmaghoṣa Buddha, Nakṣatrarāja Buddha,
348a Gandhottama Buddha, Gandhaprabhāsa Buddha, Mahārciskandha Buddha,
Ratnakusumasaṃpuṣpitagātra Buddha, Śālendrarāja Buddha, Ratnotpalaśrī Buddha, Sarvārthadarśa Buddha, and Sumerukalpa Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands they extend their long, broad tongues and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled 'Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas.'

12 "Śāriputra, why do you think this teaching is called the 'Sutra of Protection by All Buddhas'? Śāriputra, all good men and women who hear this sutra and hold fast to it, and also those who hear the names of those buddhas,[40] are protected by all the buddhas and dwell in the stage of non-retrogression

for realizing highest, perfect enlightenment. This is why, Śāriputra, you should accept my words in faith and the teachings of all the buddhas.

"Śāriputra, those who have already aspired, now aspire, or in the future will aspire to be born in the land of Amitāyus Buddha all dwell in the stage of non-retrogression for realizing highest, perfect enlightenment. They have already been born, are now being born, or will be born in that land. Hence, Śāriputra, good men and women of faith should aspire to birth there.

13 "Śāriputra, just as I now praise the inconceivable virtue of other buddhas, they also praise my inconceivable virtue, saying, 'Śākyamuni Buddha, you have accomplished an extremely difficult and unprecedented task. In this Sahā world, during the evil period of the five defilements—those of time, views, passions, sentient beings, and lifespan—you have attained highest, perfect enlightenment and, for the sake of sentient beings, have delivered this teaching which is the most difficult in the world to accept in faith.'

"Śāriputra, you must realize that I have accomplished this difficult task during the period of the five defilements. That is to say, having attained highest, perfect enlightenment, I have for the sake of the world delivered this teaching, which is so hard for [people] to accept in faith. This is indeed an extremely difficult task."

14 When the Buddha had delivered this sutra, Śāriputra and all the monks, together with beings of the whole world, including *deva*s, humans, and *asura*s, rejoiced at what they had heard and reverently accepted it. Having worshiped him, they departed.

End of *The Sutra on Amitāyus Buddha*
Delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha

Notes

[1] "And also"; this reading follows the Sanskrit text; *tathā* is rendered *ru zhi* (such), but here its other meaning "and also" applies.

[2] The ordinary reading of this stanza, which is not appropriate to the context, is:

> Suppose there are buddhas,
> A thousand million *koṭi*s in number,
> And great sages in multitudes
> Countless as the sands of the Ganges River.
> Rather than making offerings
> To all those buddhas,
> I shall seek the Way
> Resolutely and unflinchingly.

My reading is attested to by the Tang and Song versions and the Sanskrit text. *Fu ru* ("nothing is better than. . .") may correspond to *atulya* (incomparable), which describes *bodhi* (Way). From the Mahayana viewpoint, to make offerings to buddhas is the essential part of the bodhisattva path, far from being contradictory to the practice of "seeking the Way resolutely and unflinchingly."

[3] "A pint measure": I have followed the popular edition which says *sheng* (pint); the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition has *dou* (peck), which is too large a measure to be applied here.

[4] "How long was. . . ?": The Taishō Tripiṭaka and other editions read, "How long was the duration of the land of that buddha?"; amended according to the Tang and Song versions and the Sanskrit text.

[5] "Not knowing": The Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads *zhi* (knowing); I have followed the popular editions which read *fu zhi* (not knowing).

[6] *Nei zhi shi nian,* "think of me even ten times": The traditional reading in the Pure Land schools in China and Japan is "call my Name even ten times." The corresponding Sanskrit phrase *antaśo daśabhiś cittotpāda-parivartaiḥ* means "even with ten arisings of thought"; cf. Max Müller's translation, "even those who have only ten times repeated the thought (of that buddha country)." According to Tanluan, *shi nian,* which appears in the *Contemplation Sutra,* means ten concentrated and uninterrupted thoughts on Amitābha and also means ten continuous sayings of his Name.

[7] *Fu ke si-yi* (inconceivable), *acintya* in Sanskrit; often used, as in this and other cases, to describe a large number; cf. *Mahāvyutpatti,* 7814.

[8] "Silken canopies": This reading follows the Ming and popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "various canopies."

[9] "Their senses of hearing. . .": The Taishō Tripiṭaka edition omits "their senses of hearing will remain clear and sharp"; supplied by other editions.

[10] "Silken canopies": *See* note 8.

[11] "Sincerely transfer the merit. . .": According to Shinran, it is Amitāyus who sincerely transfers the merit, so his reading of this sentence is: "through the Buddha's sincere transference of the merit (to the aspirants), they aspire to be born there. . . ."

[12] "Amitāyus": As for this and four more occurrences of "Amitāyus," all editions read "Wu liang jiao" (Immeasurable Enlightened One) except the Tang and the Sanskrit texts, which read "Amitāyus."

[13] "Supernal aspiration": This reading follows the popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "immeasurable mind."

[14] "The nature of all *dharma*s": I have followed the popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "various teaching gates."

[15] The bracketed interpolation is based on the Sanskrit text, in which "innumerable" or "immeasurable" describes "merits," not "insight."

[16] "Merit and wisdom": This reading follows the popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "merit."

[17] "The power of good karma. . .": This and the following few words have been explained contextually rather than translated literally.

[18] "Kinsmen," lit., "inner and outer relatives," i.e., relatives on the father's side and on the mother's side.

[19] "The Name of Amitāyus," lit., "voice of Amitāyus."

[20] "Their transient selves...," *hun shen jing shi,* is translated here as "transient selves, vital energy, and consciousness." Although this section is missing in the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts, we find in the *Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra* a similar phrase, *shi hun shen* (Taishō Vol. 13, No. 418, 899b, 905b; *see also* the English translation by Paul Harrison, Numata Center, 1998). From its Tibetan version, we can confirm that this phrase corresponds to *rnam par śes pa* (*vijñāna,* consciousness).

[21] "Wealth": I have followed the popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "retain."

[22] "Buddha lands": This phrase is missing in the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition and so is supplied according to other editions.

[23] "Fourteen buddha lands": These include this world, which is Śākyamuni Buddha's land called "Sahā."

[24] "Kālayaśas": The popular editions read "Kālayaśas during the Yuan-jia era"; the duration of this era is 424–453.

[25] "A certain Vedic scripture": Source unknown.

[26] "The World-honored One . . . was staying on Vulture Peak": Śākyamuni Buddha was then preaching the *Lotus Sutra*.

[27] ". . . the pure acts," *guan bi guo jing ye cheng zhe,* admits of different interpretations: 1) According to Shandao, this passage reads, "Fix your thoughts upon and visualize that buddha land; this is called 'accomplishing the pure acts.'" 2) Huiyuan of Jingying Temple and Yuanzhao, "Fix your thoughts upon and visualize that buddha land and the person of pure karmic perfection." 3) Shinran's reading is: "Fix your thoughts upon and visualize the person of pure karmic perfection in that buddha land." In his *Kyōgyōshinshō,* Chapter VI, "Revealing the Transformed Buddhas and Lands" (see *Kyōgyōshinshō: On Teaching, Practice, Faith, and Enlightenment,* translated by Hisao Inagaki, Numata Center, 2003), Shinran interprets *jing ye cheng jia* as "the Tathāgata of Unhindered Light Shining throughout the Ten Directions," namely, Amitābha.

[28] "Except when sleeping": This reading follows the popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "except when eating."

[29] "Evil karma that would bind one to birth and death for eighty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s": This and similar phrases in the passages below have also been construed as "evil karma that one has committed during eighty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s"; a fragment of the Uigur translation supports the other reading, which is adopted here.

[30] "Ponds," lit., "water."

[31] "Like those on the heavenly jeweled banners": Some scholars take *bao-chuang* as referring to the god of music, Ratnaketu. According to the *Sutra on Maitreya's Ascent to the Tuṣita Heaven,* there are in the palace of the Tuṣita Heaven five great gods, headed by Jewel Banner (Ratnaketu). He showers from his body seven kinds of jewels; each jewel transforms itself into a musical instrument, which hovers in midair and produces music spontaneously without a player. The music contains immeasurable tones that are pleasing to people's minds (Taishō Vol. 14, 49b).

[32] "Cosmic bodies": This is a provisional translation of *fa jie shen* (*dharmadhātukāya*, Dharma-realm body). This term was interpreted in different ways by Chinese masters: 1) Non-Pure Land masters, such as Huiyuan of Jingying Temple, Zhiyi, and Jizang, took this as meaning "formless *dharmakāya*"; in this case, *dharmadhātu* or Dharma realm is synonymous with *zhen ru,* true suchness (*bhūta-tathatā*). 2) According to Tanluan, this phrase means the Buddha's image produced by the meditating mind; here *fa jiai* means the sphere of mental perception. 3) Shandao interprets *fa jiai* as the realm of sentient beings—as the Buddha's compassion reaches sentient beings, so does his bodily manifestation without hindrance; Shandao thus construes the whole phrase as "the body accommodated to the realm of sentient beings."

[33] "Your mind produces the Buddha's image, and is itself the Buddha": The phrase *shi xin zuo fa shi xin shi fo* was differently interpreted: 1) Masters of non-Pure Land schools took this as meaning that when the meditation on one's pure nature (symbolically expressed as Amitābha or Amitāyus) is accomplished, one becomes a buddha and that there is no buddha apart from one's true nature. 2) Tanluan's interpretation is this: Just as the image of an object is seen reflected in the clear water, so the Buddha's image is perceived by the meditating mind; thus the Buddha's glorious body is inseparable from one's meditating mind, and so the Buddha does not exist apart from one's mind. 3) According to Shandao, the phrase implies that through devotion one perceives the Buddha's image as if one produced it and that the Buddha manifests his body in response to one's contemplation, and so no buddha exists apart from this meditating mind. 4) According to Shinran, the meditating mind implicitly refers to the entrusting mind given by the Buddha; since this mind is the *bodhi*-mind and the cause of buddhahood, it becomes a buddha. Similar terms *xin zuo fa* and *xin shi fa* occur in the *Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra,* which shares much common ground with the *Contemplation Sutra*.

[34] "The uppermost, invisible part," *wu jian ding xiang* (*anavalokita-mūrdhatā*), is one of the thirty-two physical characteristics of the Buddha. It is the highest point of the protuberance on the Buddha's head (*uṣṇīṣa-śīrṣa*), which no one, not even a bodhisattva of the tenth stage, is able to see.

[35] "Joins his palms," lit., "joins his palms and crosses his hands."

[36] "Evil karma": This reading follows the popular editions; the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition reads "evil teaching," *e fa.*

[37] ". . . attained insight. . .": In Shandao's view, Vaidehī attained insight into the nonarising of all *dharma*s when she saw Amitāyus and the two attendant bodhisattvas, prior to Śākyamuni's exposition of the lotus throne in section 15 of the *Contemplation Sutra,* pp. 72–73.

[38] "Amitāyus": Throughout this sutra the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition has *a mi tuo* (Amida); in my rendition, either "Amitāyus" or "Amitābha" is used, depending on the context.

[39] "Akṣobhya Buddha": The names of the buddhas in the six directions are given in Sanskrit; when no names are available in the Sanskrit text, they have been reconstructed from their Chinese translations. For English meanings of the Sanskrit names, see the Appendix, List of the Buddhas in the *Smaller Sutra,* pp. 101–102.

[40] "All good people . . . those buddhas": The popular editions read "all good men and women who hear the Name of Amida Buddha expounded by all the buddhas and the name of this sutra."

Appendix

List of the Buddhas in the *Smaller Sutra* with English Equivalents

East
- Akṣobhya (Immovable)
- Merudhvaja (Sumeru Banner)
- Mahāmeru (Great Sumeru)
- Meruprabhāsa (Sumeru Light)
- Mañjusvara (Beautiful Voice)

South
- Candrasūryapradīpa (Lamp of the Sun and Moon)
- Yaśasprabha (Light of Fame)
- Mahārciskandha (Shoulders of Great Flame)
- Merupradīpa (Sumeru Lamp)
- Anantavīrya (Limitless Effort)

West
- Amitāyus (Immeasurable Life)
- Amitaketu (Immeasurable Ensign)
- Amitadhvaja (Immeasurable Banner)
- Mahāprabha (Great Light)
- Mahāprabhāsa (Great Brilliance)
- Ratnaketu (Jewel Banner)
- Śuddharaśmiprabha (Brilliance of Pure Light)

North
- Arciskandha (Flaming Shoulder)
- Vaiśvānaranirghoṣa (Universal Sound)
- Duṣpradharṣa (Not to Be Assailed)
- Ādityasaṃbhava (Sunrise)
- Jālinīprabha (Net Light)

Nadir
- Siṃha (Lion)
- Yaśas (Fame)
- Yaśasprabhāsa (Brilliance of Fame)
- Dharma

Dharmadhvaja (Banner of the Dharma)
Dharmadhara (Holding the Dharma)

Zenith
Brahmaghoṣa (Brahma's Voice)
Nakṣatrarāja (King of Stars)
Gandhottama (Best Fragrance)
Gandhaprabhāsa (Fragrant Light)
Mahārciskandha (Shoulders of Great Flame)
Ratnakusumasaṃpuṣpitagātra (Having a Body Adorned with a Jewel Flower)
Śālendrarāja (Lord King of the Śāla Tree)
Ratnotpalaśrī (Glory of Blue Lotus Flower Jewels)
Sarvārthadarśa (Seeing All Benefits)
Sumerukalpa (Sumeru-like)

Buddhist Cosmology

I. Nirvana/Buddha lands

II. World of Non-form (*ārūpyadhātu*)
A. Abode of Boundless Space (*ākāśa-ānantya-āyatana*)
B. Abode of Boundless Consciousness (*vijñāna-ānantya-āyatana*)
C. Abode of Nothingness (*ākiñcanya-āyatana*)
D. Abode of Neither Thought nor Non-thought (*naiva-saṃjñā-na-asaṃjñā-āyatana*)

III. World of Form (*rūpadhātu*)
A. The First *Dhyāna*
1. Brahmāpāriṣadya (Heaven of the Councilors of Brahmā)
2. Brahmapurohita (Heaven of the High Priests of Brahmā)
3. Mahābrahman (Heaven of Great Brahmā)
B. The Second *Dhyāna*
1. Parītta-ābha (Heaven of Lesser Light)
2. Apramāṇa-ābha (Heaven of Infinite Light)
3. Ābhāsvara (Heaven of Supreme Light)
C. The Third *Dhyāna*
1. Parīttaśubha (Heaven of Lesser Purity)
2. Apramāṇaśubha (Heaven of Infinite Purity)
3. Śubhakṛtsna (Heaven of Universal Purity)
D. The Fourth *Dhyāna*
1. Anabhraka (Cloudless Heaven)
2. Puṇyaprasava (Merit-producing Heaven)
3. Bṛhatphala (Heaven of Greater Fruits)
4. Abṛha (Heaven Free of Trouble)
5. Atapa (Heaven without Affliction)
6. Sudṛśa (Heaven of Excellent Viewing)
7. Sudarśana (Heaven of Excellent Observation)
8. Akaniṣṭha (Highest Heaven)

IV. World of Desire (*kāmadhātu*)
  A. Realm of the Gods (*deva*s): The Six Heavens
    1. Cāturmahārāja (Heaven of the Four Kings)
      a. East: Dhṛtarāṣṭra (Protector of the State)
      b. South: Virūḍhaka (Growing)
      c. West: Virūpākṣa (Deformed-eyed One)
      d. North: Vaiśravaṇa (Extensively Heard)
    2. Trāyastriṃśa (Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods)
    3. Yāma or Suyāma (Heaven of Good Time)
    4. Tuṣita (Heaven of Contentment)
    5. Nirmāṇarati (Heaven of Enjoyment of Pleasures Provided by Themselves)
    6. Paranirmitavaśavartin (Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others)
  B. Realm of Human Beings (*manuṣya*): The Four Great Continents
    1. East: Pūrvavideha (the eastern country of the Videhas)
    2. South: Jambudvīpa (the mango-growing island)
    3. West: Avaragodānīya (the western country where cows are used for transactions)
    4. North: Uttarakuru (the country of the northern Kuru)
  C. Realm of Fighting Spirits (*asura*s)
  D. Realm of Animals (*tiryañc*)
  E. Realm of Hungry Ghosts (*preta*s)
  F. Hells (*naraka*s), from top to bottom
    1. Saṃjīva (Revival)
    2. Kālasūtra (Black Rope)
    3. Saṃghāta (Crushing)
    4. Raurava (Shrieks)
    5. Mahāraurava (Great Shrieks)
    6. Tāpana (Burning)
    7. Pratāpana (Great Burning)
    8. Avīci (Interminable)

Glossary

abusing the Right Dharma: Disparaging the true Buddhist teachings, particularly the Mahayana teachings. *See also* Mahayana; Right Dharma.

Ādityasaṃbhava (“Sunrise”): The name of a buddha in the north.

affliction (*kleśa*): A mental function that disturbs and pollutes the mind and body. *See also* three defilements.

Ajātaśatru: The son of King Bimbisāra and Queen Vaidehī; he imprisoned his father and left him to die in jail, imprisoned his mother, and usurped the throne of Magadha. Along with the monk Devadatta, under whose influence he committed these evil acts, he appears in some sutras as the archetypal evil person who becomes the object of the Buddha’s compassion. He later repented and became a disciple of the Buddha. *See also* Bimbisāra; Devadatta; Magadha; Vaidehī.

Ajita (“Unconquerable”): The name of a bodhisattva identified with Maitreya.

Ājñātakauṇḍinya: One of the five earliest disciples of the Buddha.

Akṣobhya (“Immovable”): The name of a buddha in the east.

Amida. *See* Amitābha.

Amitābha (“Infinite Light”; Jpn: Amida): The name of a transcendent buddha who dwells in the Pure Land, from the Sanskrit *amita* (“infinite”); “Infinite Light” symbolizes infinite wisdom. Also known as Amitāyus (“Infinite Life”), which symbolizes infinite compassion. Amitābha/Amida is one of the most popular buddhas and is mentioned in more than two hundred sutras, of which the *Larger Sutra* is the most important, as one of the canonical texts of Pure Land Buddhism in China and Japan. Amitābha began his spiritual career as a mendicant called Dharmākara, who made Forty-eight Vows and performed various bodhisattva practices to fulfill them. After many eons his vows were fulfilled and he became the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life. His land is called Sukhāvatī, “Land of Utmost Bliss,” also known as the Pure Land and the Western Paradise. For purposes of meditative practice, the Pure Land sutras describe Amitābha’s land as being in the west. As promised in the Eighteenth Vow, those who have joyful faith and recite his Name, a practice called the *nembutsu,* are assured of rebirth in the Pure Land. The tradition of Buddhism centering around worship of Amitābha arose in India and further developed in China and Japan. He is thus the principal buddha in the Jōdo, Shin, and other Pure Land schools. *See also* Dharmākara; Forty-eight Vows; Name; Pure Land; Pure Land school.

Amitadhvaja ("Immeasurable Banner"): The name of a buddha in the west.

Amitaketu ("Immeasurable Ensign"): The name of a buddha in the west.

Amitāyus. *See* Amitābha.

Ānanda ("Happiness" or "Joy"): Śākyamuni's cousin, close disciple, and personal attendant, renowned for his ability to recite all the Buddha's sermons from memory. *See also* Śākyamuni.

Anantavīrya ("Limitless Effort"): The name of a buddha in the south.

Anāthapiṇḍada ("Giver of Food to the Poor"): Another name of Sudatta, a wealthy merchant of Śrāvastī who purchased the Jeta Grove and built a monastery there for the Buddha and his sangha. *See also* Śrāvastī.

Aniruddha ("Unobstructed"): One of the ten great disciples of the Buddha, renowned for his divine sight.

Arciskandha ("Flaming Shoulder"): The name of a buddha in the north.

arhat ("worthy one"): A saint, one who has completely eradicated the evil passions and attained liberation from the cycle of birth and death (samsara); the highest of the four stages of spiritual attainment in the Hinayana. When capitalized, the term is one of the ten epithets for a buddha. *See also* evil passions; Hinayana; ten epithets for a buddha.

aspiration for enlightenment: The mind of enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), the altruistic aspiration of the bodhisattva to attain enlightenment (*bodhi*) and realize liberation in order to help other sentient beings toward liberation. *See also* bodhisattva; enlightenment.

asura: A class of demigods; a fighting spirit; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Aśvajit ("Gaining Horses"): One of the five earliest disciples of the Buddha.

Auspicious Kalpa: The present cosmic period, in which a thousand buddhas are believed to appear.

Avalokiteśvara: ("Lord of Beholding"): The name of a great bodhisattva who represents Amitābha's great compassion. One of the two attendant bodhisattvas of Amitābha, who frequently appears in a triad with Avalokiteśvara on his left and Mahāsthāmaprāpta on his right. *See also* Amitābha; bodhisattva; great compassion; Mahāsthāmaprāpta.

Bhadrajit ("Gaining Happiness"): One of the five earliest disciples of the Buddha.

Bhadrapāla ("Gracious Protector"): The foremost of the sixteen lay bodhisattvas.

bhikṣu: A fully ordained Buddhist monk.

Bimbisāra: The fifth king of the Śaiśnāga dynasty in Magadha and a follower of the Buddha. In his later years he was imprisoned by his son Ajātaśatru and died in confinement. *See also* Ajātaśatru; Magadha.

birth and death. *See* samsara.

birth by transformation: A form of birth in the Pure Land attained by aspirants who sincerely entrust themselves to Amitābha; they are instantaneously born there and attain full physical maturity. *See also* birth in the embryonic state.

birth in the embryonic state: A form of birth in the Pure Land attained by devotees who cultivate merit by good acts but who do not entirely entrust themselves to Amitābha; at death they are reborn in lotus buds in the Pure Land and remain there for five hundred years without being able to see or hear the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. *See also* birth by transformation.

bodhi. *See* enlightenment.

bodhicitta. *See* aspiration for enlightenment.

bodhisattva ("enlightenment being"): The spiritual ideal of the Mahayana, one who cultivates wisdom, accumulates merit by performing the practice of six *pāramitā*s, and attains enlightenment for the sake of all beings. Upon completion of all the bodhisattva practices and stages, the bodhisattva achieves buddhahood but vows to refrain from entering nirvana until all beings are liberated. Capitalized, the term refers to Śākyamuni before his enlightenment. *See also* bodhisattva stages; buddhahood; enlightenment; Mahayana; six *pāramitā*s.

bodhisattva stages (*bhūmi*s): A series of spiritual stages that must be accomplished by a bodhisattva who has awakened aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) and made vows, culminating in the attainment of buddhahood. In these stages, one is expected to perform various practices for innumerable eons over many lifetimes. Ten stages were established in Indian Buddhism; Chinese Buddhists later developed a system of fifty-two stages. *See also* bodhisattva; stage of becoming a buddha after one more life; stage of joy; stage of non-retrogression.

bodhi tree: The tree beneath which Śākyamuni sat in contemplation and attained enlightenment. *See also* contemplation; enlightenment; Śākyamuni.

Boundless Light: 1) One of the twelve kinds of light of Amitābha; 2) another name for Mahāsthāmaprāpta. *See also* Amitābha; Mahāsthāmaprāpta.

Brahmā: Originally, the creator god in Hinduism, incorporated into Buddhism as a tutelary god.

Brahmaghoṣa ("Brahmā's Voice"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

Brahmā Heaven: The heaven of the world of form. *See also* three worlds.

Buddha ("Awakened One"): As a proper noun this refers to Śākyamuni; in general use it refers to any fully enlightened person or any of a number of transcendent beings who embody and represent ultimate truth. *See also* Śākyamuni; ultimate truth.

Buddha-Dharma. *See* Right Dharma.

buddhahood: The state of becoming a buddha, the goal of the bodhisattva. *See also* bodhisattva.

buddha-garland *samādhi:* The *samādhi* entered into by Samantabhadra before teaching the Dharma. *See also samādhi;* Samantabhadra.

buddha-nature: The potentiality for buddhahood; the essential nature of a buddha that all beings possess.

buddha-recollection *samādhi:* A state of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) in which the practitioner visualizes Amitābha; also, an intensive practice of recitation of the Name of Amitābha through which one attains union with him. *See also* Amitābha; Name; *samādhi*.

Candraprabha ("Moonlight"): The name of one of King Bimbisāra's ministers.

Candrasūryapradīpa ("Lamp of the Sun and Moon"): The name of a buddha in the south.

Cao-Wei dynasty: The Chinese kingdom of Wei founded by Cao Cao in 216.

clear understanding of the one hundred *dharma*s: 1) Clear understanding of the one hundred principles of truth in the stage of joy; 2) in the Consciousness Only school, a type of wisdom in which one clearly discerns the one hundred constituent elements (*dharma*s) of all that exists. *See also* stage of joy.

compassion: Empathy with those who suffer and the desire to end the suffering of others. Compassion and wisdom are the two most important virtues in the Mahayana. *See also* great compassion.

complete precepts of a monk or nun: The two hundred and fifty precepts for a fully ordained monk (*bhikṣu*) or three hundred and forty-eight for a fully ordained nun (*bhikṣuṇī*). *See also* precepts.

Confucianism: An ethical, religious system of China originating in the teaching of Confucius (c. 551–479 B.C.E.); it centers around filial duty and emphasizes the virtues of benevolence and propriety. More specifically, Confucianism teaches the five constant virtues to be followed by all people: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and sincerity. The original individualistic ethical ideal developed into a political one; Confucius sought to establish the norm of ethics for the king. His influence was so great that the number of his disciples is said to have been three thousand. After his death, Confucian sanctuaries were built throughout China and its teachings spread far and wide in China and beyond— Confucianism formed the basic ethical norm of Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. *See also* five virtues.

contemplation: A state of meditative concentration in which the meditator and the object of meditation become one; serene contemplation. *See also samādhi*.

definitely assured stage: The stage attained by those who have absolute faith in Amitābha and are thus assured of birth in the Pure Land and attainment of buddhahood; same as the stage of non-retrogression. *See also* Amitābha; buddhahood; Pure Land; stage of non-retrogression.

deva: A god, a divine being; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Devadatta ("God-given"): A cousin of the Buddha who became his disciple but later tried to murder him and assume leadership of the sangha. Devadatta incited Prince Ajātaśatru to kill his father, King Bimbisāra, and usurp the throne. *See also* Ajātaśatru; Bimbisāra; sangha.

dhāraṇī: A mystic phrase, spell, or incantation.

dharma: Any phenomenon, thing, element, or attribute; the elements that make up the perceived phenomenal world.

Dharma: The truth, law; the teachings of the Buddha. *See also* Right Dharma.

Dharmadhara ("Holder of the Dharma"): The name of a buddha in the nadir.

Dharmadhvaja ("Banner of the Dharma"): The name of a buddha in the nadir.

Dharmākara ("Store of the Dharma"): The name of the bodhisattva who made the Forty-eight Vows and upon fulfillment of those vows became Amitābha Buddha. *See also* Amitābha; Forty-eight Vows.

Dharma Prince: An epithet for a bodhisattva; especially used as a title for Mañjuśrī. *See also* Mañjuśrī.

Dharma realm (*dharmadhātu*): The sphere of ultimate truth or reality; objects of mental conception in general; the entire universe. *See also* ultimate truth.

dhyāna heaven: The four types of heavens of the world of form, in which those who practice meditation (*dhyāna*) are reborn. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, pp. 102–103; three worlds.

Dīpaṅkara ("Making Light"): The name of a past buddha.

divine ear. *See* six supernatural powers.

divine eye. *See* six supernatural powers.

Duṣpradharṣa ("Not to Be Assailed"): The name of a buddha in the north.

effortless spontaneity: The ultimate state of enlightenment in which one thinks and acts in accord with the Dharma effortlessly; the nirvanic state attained by those who are reborn in the Pure Land.

eight abstinences. *See* eight precepts.

eight kinds of superhuman beings: Eight classes of mythical beings from Indian folklore that were incorporated into Buddhism as protectors: *deva*s (gods), *nāga*s (dragons), *yakṣa*s (flesh-eating demons), *gandharva*s (heavenly musicians), *asura*s (fighting spirits), *garuḍa*s (giant birds), *kiṃnara*s (heavenly singers), and *mahoraga*s (snake demons).

eight precepts: Undertaken by lay Buddhists for certain periods of time, they include abstaining from killing, stealing, engaging in sexual activity, using false speech, and ingesting intoxicants; and refraining from indulging in such idle pleasures as using perfumes, singing and dancing, wearing bodily decoration, going to dances or plays, sleeping on a raised bed, and eating after noon. The first five of these constitute the five precepts. *See also* five precepts; precepts.

eight qualities of voice: The voice of a buddha possesses these eight qualities—it is pleasant, soft, harmonious, dignified and wise, masculine, unerring, deep and far-reaching, and inexhaustible.

eight *samādhi*s of liberation: States of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) on 1) the impurity of the body, to extinguish physical passions; 2) the impurity of external objects, to extinguish desire; 3) pure aspects of external objects, to extinguish passions; 4) boundless space, to remove attachment to material objects; 5) boundless consciousness, to remove attachment to space; 6) nonexistence, to remove attachment to consciousness; 7) the stage of neither thought nor non-thought, to extinguish attachment to nonexistence; and 8) the final *samādhi* that extinguishes all thoughts and perceptions and enables the practitioner to dwell in the stage of complete nirvana. *See also samādhi;* nirvana.

emptiness: A central Mahayana doctrine that all phenomena (*dharma*s) come into existence only in dependence on causes and conditions (*pratītyasamutpāda*), and thus are empty of independent, inherent, and eternal selfhood. *See also* law of causality; Mahayana; no-self.

Encircling Adamantine Mountains: The outermost mountain range encircling this world system, made of iron. *See also* Mount Sumeru.

enlightenment (*bodhi*): The state of the highest perfection of wisdom; the state of undefiled purity and eternal bliss. Śākyamuni's awakening under the *bodhi* tree, when he realized the Dharma of suchness and the innate buddha-nature of all beings and became a buddha, represents the Buddhist ideal of enlightenment. *See also* buddha-nature; suchness.

evil passions: (*kleśa*s): Mental functions that disturb and defile the mind and body. They are considered the cause of transmigration in samsara; by extinguishing them, one becomes an arhat. In the Mahayana, through recognizing the nonsubstantiality of the evil passions, a bodhisattva attains liberation and realizes enlightenment. *See also* arhat; bodhisattva; enlightenment; Mahayana; samsara.

evil paths. *See* five evil realms; three evil realms.

Exalted Being: A synonym for "bodhisattva."

faith: Generally in Buddhism, this means acceptance of the Buddha's teachings; in Pure Land Buddhism, it is singlehearted concentration of Amitābha accompanied by recitation of his Name. This practice of concentration and dedication ultimately leads to complete entrusting in Amitābha's salvific power and, through it, acceptance of his merits of wisdom and compassion.

five burnings: The suffering caused by committing the five kinds of evils. *See* five evils.

five evil realms: The five lower states of samsaric existence through which sentient beings transmigrate due to the results of their past karma—1) the realm of heavenly beings (*deva*s and *asura*s), 2) the realm of humans, and the three evil realms of 3) animals, 4) hungry ghosts (*preta*s), and 5) hell. *See also* karma; samsara; three evil realms.

five evils: There are two interpretations—1) the five acts prohibited by the five precepts—killing, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, using false speech, and ingesting intoxicants; and 2) the five acts contrary to the five constant virtues taught in Confucianism—benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and sincerity. *See also* Confucianism; five precepts.

five good deeds: 1) The five precepts, and 2) the five acts which accord with the constant virtues of Confucianism. *See also* Confucianism; five precepts; five virtues.

five grave offenses: The most serious offenses of Buddhist followers, commission of which consigns one to the hell realm. They are: 1) killing one's father, 2) killing one's mother, 3) killing an arhat, 4) causing a buddha's body to bleed, and 5) causing disunity in the Buddhist order (sangha). *See also* arhat; sangha; three evil realms.

five sufferings: Birth, sickness, old age, death, and being parted from loved ones.

five powers: Powers obtained by the practice of the five roots of good—1) the power of faith in the Three Treasures, 2) the power of effort to practice the good, 3) the power of mindfulness of the true Dharma, 4) the power of concentration, and 5) the power of investigation into the true nature of things. *See also* five roots of good; Three Treasures.

five precepts: The five basic precepts undertaken by all lay Buddhists: not to kill, steal, commit adultery, use false speech, or ingest intoxicants.

five roots of good: The good spiritual elements that lead one to enlightenment: 1) faith in the Three Treasures and the Four Noble Truths, 2) making efforts to do good, 3) being mindful of the true Dharma, 4) concentration, and 5) insight into the true nature of reality. *See also* Four Noble Truths; Three Treasures.

five virtues: The virtues gained by doing the five good deeds; they are commonly interpreted as the five constant virtues of Confucianism. *See also* Confucianism; five good deeds.

Forty-eight Vows: The vows made by Bodhisattva Dharmākara; upon their fulfillment he became Amitābha Buddha and established his Pure Land for all sentient beings. The Forty-eight Vows are fully explicated in the *Larger Sutra*. *See also* Amitābha; Dharmākara; Original Vow; Pure Land.

four great oceans: The oceans surrounding Mount Sumeru. *See also* Mount Sumeru.

four groups of followers: Monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen.

four kinds of jewels: Gold, silver, beryl, and crystal. *See also* seven kinds of jewels.

four kinds of offerings: The four requisites of a monk—clothing, food, bedding or a sleeping place, and medicine or herbs.

Four Noble Truths: The fundamental Buddhist doctrine: 1) the truth of suffering, i.e., that life entails suffering; 2) the truth regarding the cause of suffering, i.e., that the cause of suffering is the evil passions; 3) the truth regarding the extinction of suffering, i.e., nirvana, the state of release from all suffering; and 4) the truth regarding the path to nirvana, i.e., the Noble Eightfold Path. *See also* nirvana; Noble Eightfold Path.

Gandhaprabhāsa ("Fragrant Light"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

gandharva: A heavenly musician; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Gandhottama ("Best Fragrance"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

garuḍa: A mythological giant bird said to devour dragons; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Gavāṃpati ("Lord of Cows"): A disciple of the Buddha.

Gayākāśyapa ("Kāśyapa of Gayā"): A younger brother of Uruvilvākāśyapa who converted to Buddhism with his two hundred disciples.

Golden Light: The name of a buddha in the nadir.

Golden River: The Nairañjanā River, which flows near the village of Bodh Gayā, where the Buddha attained enlightenment.

gong: The first tone of the Chinese pentatonic scale.

good teacher (*kalyāṇamitra*): A good friend in the Dharma, who leads seekers to the Buddhist Way.

great compassion: The mind of a Buddha or bodhisattva, which embraces all sentient beings without discrimination. *See also* compassion.

Great Sage: An epithet for a buddha.

Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others (Paranirmitavaśavartin): The sixth and highest heaven of the world of desire, where demons are said to dwell. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; six heavens; three worlds.

Heaven of Pure Abode: The fourth *dhyāna* heaven of the world of form; it is divided into five levels. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, pp. 103; three worlds.

Heaven of the Four Kings (Cāturmahārāja): The first of the six heavens of the world of desire, presided over by the four guardian gods of the world—1) Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the east, 2) Virūḍhaka in the south, 3) Virūpākṣa in the west, and 4) Vaiśravaṇa in the north. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, pp. 103; six heavens; three worlds.

Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods (Trāyastriṃśa): The second of the six heavens of the world of desire, located on top of Mount Sumeru. Each of the four peaks in the four cardinal directions is inhabited by eight gods, with Indra, the lord of the gods, dwelling in a palace in the center. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; Mount Sumeru; six heavens; three worlds.

hell. *See* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; five evil realms; three evil realms.

highest heaven of the world of form: Fourth and highest of the four heavens of the world of form, popularly known as Akaniṣṭha Heaven. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; three worlds.

Hinayana ("Lesser Vehicle"): A derogatory term applied by Mahayanists to various schools of early Buddhism whose highest spiritual goal was the attainment of individual liberation, in contrast to the bodhisattva ideal of the Mahayana. Twenty Hinayana schools based on various points of doctrine formed in the early centuries of the development of Buddhism. Today the term Theravāda ("Way of the Elders") is used to describe this school of Buddhism, which is practiced primarily in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and southern Vietnam. *See also* arhat; Mahayana; *śrāvaka*.

ignorance (*avidyā*): The basic cause of suffering, which hinders one's ability to attain insight into the Dharma. It takes two forms, wrong beliefs and absence of wisdom.

impermanence (*anitya*): One of the basic principles of Buddhism; the truth that all phenomena (*dharma*s) are subject to change and are impermanent. *See also dharma.*

insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s: A higher spiritual awakening in which one recognizes that no phenomenon (*dharma*) really arises or perishes; insight into emptiness. *See also dharma;* emptiness; non-arising of all *dharma*s.

Jālinīprabha ("Net Light"): The name of a buddha in the north.

Jambudvīpa: In Buddhist cosmology, the triangular continent situated to the south of Mount Sumeru, corresponding to the Indian subcontinent; the name derives from the word *jambu* (mango) because this continent is said to produce a good deal of this fruit. *See also* Mount Sumeru.

Jambu River: A mythological river that runs through the mango forest in the northern part of Jambudvīpa, famous for producing purple-gold. *See also* Jambudvīpa; purple-gold.

Jeta Grove. *See* Anāthapiṇḍada.

Jīvaka: A nephew of King Bimbisāra who served as a royal minister; also a famous and skilled physician who once cured the Buddha of a serious illness. *See also* Bimbisāra.

jīvaṃjīvaka: A mythological two-headed bird.

kalaviṅka: A mythological bird with a woman's head said to possess a wonderful voice.

Kālayaśas (d. 442): A monk from Central Asia who went to China and translated several important sutras into Chinese, including the *Contemplation Sutra.*

Kālodayin ("Black Udayin"): A disciple of the Buddha.

kalpa: An eon, an immensely long period of time. There are three types of *kalpa*s: small, medium, and large; a smaller *kalpa* is a period in which the average human lifespan increases by one year every hundred years until it reaches eighty-four thousand years.

Kapphiṇa: A disciple of the Buddha.

karma (lit., "action"): Any action of body, speech, or mind (thought), which may be either morally good, bad, or neutral. The concept of karma is connected with the Buddhist theory of transmigration, since most actions create either a positive or negative formation in one's consciousness that lead to rebirth in samsara. *See also* law of causality; samsara.

kiṃnara: A heavenly singer; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Kimpila: A disciple of the Buddha.

kiṃśuka: A kind of tree that bears beautiful red blossoms.

King of Light: The name of a buddha in the nadir.

koṭi: A large unit of measurement, said to equal ten million.

kṣatriya: The Indian caste (social class) of warriors and nobles.

Kumārajīva (344–413): A monk-scholar from Central Asia who went to China in 401 and translated many Buddhist texts into Chinese, including the *Smaller Sutra on Amitāyus.*

Land of Peace and Bliss: Another name for Amitābha's Pure Land. *See* Pure Land.

Land of Peace and Provision: Another name for Amitābha's Pure Land. *See* Pure Land.

Land of Utmost Bliss: Another name for Amitābha's Pure Land. *See* Pure Land.

law of causality: The fundamental Buddhist doctrine which teaches that one's good and bad acts (karma) will result in happiness or suffering, respectively. The state of one's present life is based on one's acts in past lives, and one's acts in the present

life determine the state of one's next life. Based on this principle, the unique ethical and religious system of practice and discipline developed in Buddhism. In the Mahayana, the law of causality is conceived of in a wider sense; the individualistic view of karma has been expanded to the view of universal interrelatedness, so that bodhisattvas and buddhas take all sentient beings' karma as their own. *See also* bodhisattva; karma; Mahayana.

li: A Chinese unit of measurement, approximately one-fourth to one-third of a mile.

Liu-Song dynasty (442–479): A Chinese kingdom that existed south of the Yangze River.

Lokeśvararāja ("World-sovereign King"): The name of a buddha; the teacher of the bodhisattva Dharmākara. *See also* Dharmākara.

Magadha: A kingdom in northern India at the time of Śākyamuni Buddha.

Mahācunda: A brother of Śāriputra who became a disciple of the Buddha.

Mahākapphiṇa: A disciple of the Buddha.

Mahākāśyapa: The disciple designated by the Buddha as his successor, renowned for his strict observance of the precepts.

Mahākātyāyana: One of the ten great disciples of the Buddha, renowned for his skill in debate.

Mahākauṣṭhila: A disciple of the Buddha.

Mahāmaudgalyāyana: One of the Buddha's foremost disciples, noted for his supernatural powers.

Mahāmeru ("Great Sumeru"): The name of a buddha in the east.

Mahānāma ("Great Name"): One of the five earliest disciples of the Buddha.

Mahāprabha ("Great Light"): The name of a buddha in the west.

Mahāprabhāsa ("Great Brilliance"): The name of a buddha in the west.

Mahārciskandha ("Shoulders of Great Flame"): 1) The name of a buddha in the south; 2) the name of a Buddha in the zenith.

mahāsattva ("great being"): A bodhisattva of great compassion and energy who has reached an advanced stage of enlightenment. *See also* bodhisattva.

Mahāsthāmaprāpta ("Possessed of Great Power"): One of the two bodhisattvas attending Amitābha; he represents Amitābha's wisdom. *See also* Amitābha; Avalokiteśvara; wisdom.

Mahayana ("Great Vehicle"): Along with the Hinayana, one of the two major schools of Buddhism. The Mahayana aims at bringing all sentient beings to buddhahood. Followers of the Mahayana are called bodhisattvas, who at the outset of their careers

make vows to save all beings, and cultivate merit and wisdom in order to fulfill these vows. When their vows are fulfilled, bodhisattvas become buddhas. Although historical evidence shows that the Mahayana arose a few centuries after the Buddha's lifetime, Mahayanists believe that the essential part of the Mahayana teaching was revealed by the Buddha. The development of the Mahayana resulted in a great outpouring of Buddhist literature, including the *Garland Sutra,* the Prajñāpāramitā ("Perfection of Wisdom") sutras, and others, including the three Pure Land sutras. Mahayana is the primary form of Buddhism practiced in northern Vietnam, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, China, Mongolia, Korea, and Japan. *See also* bodhisattva; Hinayana.

mahogara: A type of supernatural being said to have the body of a human and the head of a snake; a god of music; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Maitreya ("Friendly"): A bodhisattva currently dwelling in the Tuṣita Heaven, who will appear in this world as the next buddha. *See also* Tuṣita Heaven.

māndārava: A beautiful and fragrant flower; its name translates as "heavenly wonderful flower."

maṇi-gem: A legendary precious gem of a globular shape with a short pointed top, called the "wish-fulfilling gem" because it is supposedly able to produce treasure or perform supernatural feats at the wish of its owner.

Mañjuśrī ("Beauty and Glory"): The name of a bodhisattva who represents the wisdom and enlightenment of all buddhas; often portrayed mounted on a lion, attending Śākyamuni.

Mañjusvara ("Beautiful Voice"): The name of a buddha in the east.

Māra: King of the devils, the personification of evil in the Buddhist sutras.

meditation. *See* contemplation; *samādhi.*

meditation of vast and universal tranquility: The *samādhi* entered into by bodhisattvas of the ninth stage before teaching the Dharma. *See* also *samādhi;* bodhisattva stages.

Merudhvaja ("Sumeru Banner"): The name of a buddha in the east.

Meruprabhāsa ("Sumeru Light"): The name of a buddha in the east.

Merupradīpa ("Sumeru Lamp"): The name of a buddha in the south.

middle and lower stages: The two stages of advanced Hinayana practice, those of the *śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s. *See also* Hinayana; *pratyekabuddha; śrāvaka.*

Mount Sumeru: In Buddhist cosmology, the highest mountain rising from the center of the world; it has four sides, is narrowest in the center, and is surrounded by eight mountain ranges; in the ocean between the seventh and eighth of these ranges are the four great continents inhabited by human beings.

Nadīkāśyapa ("Kāśyapa of Nadī"): The younger brother of Gayākāśyapa who converted to Buddhism with his three hundred disciples.

nāga: A dragon deity; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Nakṣatrarāja ("King of Stars"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

Name: Refers to the Name of Amitābha. Recitation of the Name, called the *nembutsu,* is an important Pure Land practice. The Name is believed to perform Amitābha's salvific activity; hence, the term does not refer to the figure of this Buddha but to the phrase *Namu amida butsu* (Chinese: *Na-mo-o-mi-tuo-fo*), which signifies the devotee's taking of refuge in Amitābha Buddha. *See also* Amitābha; Pure Land school.

Nanda ("Joy"): A disciple of the Buddha.

Nārāyaṇa ("Son of the Original Man"): A Vajra-god possessing enormous physical power. *See also* Vajra-god.

naturalness: The state of things as they really are, suchness; ultimate truth or ultimate reality. *See also* suchness; ultimate truth.

nayuta: A large numerical measurement, said to be equal to ten million or one hundred billion.

nembutsu. See Name.

nirvana: Liberation from samsara, a state in which all evil passions are extinguished and the highest wisdom attained; enlightenment. *See also* enlightenment; evil passions; samsara.

Noble Eightfold Path: The eight aspects of practice for attaining nirvana, as taught by the Buddha in the fourth of the Four Noble Truths: 1) right view; 2) right thought; 3) right speech; 4) right action; 5) right livelihood; 6) right effort; 7) right mindfulness; and 8) right meditation. *See also* Four Noble Truths.

non-arising of all *dharma*s: Corresponds to the first part of the phrase "neither arising nor perishing," often used by Mahayanists to describe the ultimate truth or nature of reality. Although phenomena (*dharma*s) appear to arise and fall away, when seen from the viewpoint of ultimate truth they do not. *See also* insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s; ultimate truth.

non-returner (*anāgāmin*): The third of the four stages of spiritual attainment in the Hinayana; one who has attained this stage is no longer subject to rebirth in the world of desire. *See also* Hinayana; three worlds.

no-self: The teaching that all phenomena (*dharma*s), including one's self, do not possess inherent, independent, and eternal selfhood. *See also dharma*s; emptiness.

nyagrodha tree: A banyan or Indian fig tree.

once-returner (*sakṛdāgāmin*): The second of the four stages of spiritual attainment in the Hinayana; one who has attained this state is subject to rebirth only once in each of the human and the heavenly realms of the three worlds before attaining nirvana. *See also* Hinayana; nirvana; three worlds.

Original Vow: Specifically, the Forty-eight Vows made by the bodhisattva Dharmākara to save all sentient beings and establish a Pure Land for them. *See also* Dharmākara; Forty-eight Vows; Pure Land.

original vows (*pūrva-praṇidhāna*): The vows to save all sentient beings made by bodhisattvas at the outset of their religious careers. *See also* Original Vow.

other shore: Refers to liberation from samsara, when one reaches the other shore of the river of birth and death. *See also* samsara.

Pārāyaṇika: A disciple of the Buddha.

Perfected One: An epithet for the Buddha.

Perfectly Enlightened One: One of the ten epithets for a buddha. *See* ten epithets for a buddha.

period of cosmic change: The four periods in the endlessly recurring cycle of 1) creation, 2) duration, 3) destruction, and 4) nonexistence of universes.

period of the five defilements: A period of general degeneration characterized by five signs, consisting of degradation of the 1) *kalpa,* or eon, 2) views, 3) passions, 4) human condition, and 5) human lifespan.

physical characteristics and marks: Buddhas and bodhisattvas are said to possess thirty-two physical characteristics, such as golden skin, blue eyes, a long and broad tongue, etc.; and eighty secondary marks, such as soft hands, large ears, blue-black hair, etc.

Piṇḍola-Bhāradvāja ("Piṇḍola of the Skylark"): A disciple of the Buddha.

pratyekabuddha ("solitary enlightened one"): One of the two kinds of Hinayana sages, along with *śrāvaka*s, who seek to reach the stage of arhat and attain nirvana. A *pratyekabuddha* attains liberation by observing the principle of the twelve causations without the guidance of teacher, and does not teach others. *See also* arhat; Hinayana; nirvana; *śrāvaka.*

precepts (*śīla*): Vows regarding moral conduct undertaken by lay Buddhists and monastics. There are five basic precepts for lay Buddhists, a set of eight precepts undertaken by lay Buddhists for certain periods of time, and the complete precepts of a monk or nun. *See also* complete precepts of a monk or nun; five precepts; eight precepts; six *pāramitā*s.

pure Dharma eye: Insight into the Four Noble Truths attained in the Hinayana stage of stream-winner. *See also* Four Noble Truths; Hinayana; stream-winner.

Pure Land: Generally, any Buddha land; specifically, refers to Sukhāvatī ("Land of Utmost Bliss"), the Buddha land in the West created by the bodhisattva Dharmākara on fulfillment of his vows and attainment of Buddhahood as Amitābha. Those who are born in Amitābha's Pure Land are free from afflictions and enjoy the supreme bliss of nirvana. *See also* Amitābha; Dharmākara; Forty-eight Vows; nirvana.

Pure Land school: A school of Mahayana Buddhism that developed in fifth- century China and which remains one of the most popular schools of Buddhism in China and Japan. The salvific goal of this school centers on attaining rebirth in Amitābha's Pure Land, and the *Three Pure Land Sutras* serve as its doctrinal basis. *See also* Amitābha; Mahayana; Pure Land.

Pūrṇaka ("Abundant"): A disciple of the Buddha.

Pūrṇamaitrāyaṇīputra ("Son of Pūrṇamaitrāyaṇī" ["abundant friendliness"]): One of the ten great disciples of the Buddha, renowned for his skill in teaching the Dharma.

purple-gold: A type of gold produced by the Jambu River. *See also* Jambu River.

Rāhula ("Fetter"): The son of Prince Siddhārtha who later became the Buddha's disciple, renowned for his strict observance of the monastic rules (Vinaya).

Rājagṛha: The capital of Magadha at the time of the Buddha; the present-day city of Rajgir, India. *See also* Magadha.

Ratnaketu ("Jewel Ensign"): The name of a Buddha in the west.

Ratnakusumasaṃpuṣpitagātra ("Having a Body Adorned with Jewel Flowers"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

Ratnotpalaśrī ("Glory of Blue Lotus Flower Jewels"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

Revata: A disciple of the Buddha.

Right Dharma: The Buddha-Dharma; the teaching of the true Dharma expounded by the Buddha.

Sahā ("Endurance") world: The world system that consists of Mount Sumeru at the center and the four great continents surrounding it; the world of human existence, in which beings must endure suffering, synonymous with samsara. *See also* Mount Sumeru; samsara.

Śakra: Another name for Indra, the lord of the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods; originally a Hindu god, later incorporated into Buddhism as a protector deity. *See also* Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods.

śakra-abhilagna-maṇi-gem: The gem on the top of Śakra's head, said to be the most precious gem in the world. *See also maṇi*-gem; Śakra.

Śakra's vase: A divine vase that produces anything its owner desires. *See also* Śakra.

Śākyamuni (“the sage [*muni*] of the Śākya clan”): The historical Buddha, who lived in India in the fifth century B.C.E. and whose life and teachings form the basis for Buddhism. Born Prince Siddhārtha Gautama in the kingdom of Kapilavastu in central India, he left home at the age of twenty-nine to seek the Way of liberation. After six years of arduous practice and seeking, he attained enlightenment and became the Buddha, and taught the Dharma to others. He passed into nirvana at the age of eighty in Kuśinagara. *See also* enlightenment; Dharma; nirvana; Way.

Śālendrarāja (“Lord King of the Śāla Tree”): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

samādhi: A state of meditative concentration or absorption, focusing the mind on one point; also a transcendent mental state attained by the repeated practice of contemplation, such as visualizing a buddha or buddha land and realizing emptiness. *See also* contemplation; emptiness.

samādhi of being in the presence of all the buddhas: A state of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) in which the practitioner visualizes standing face to face with all buddhas, in particular Amitābha. *See also samādhi.*

*samādhi*s of emptiness, non-form, and non-desire: States of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) in which the practitioner realizes that all *dharma*s are empty of inherent existence and thus are not to be grasped as objects of perception and desire. *See also dharma;* emptiness; *samādhi.*

samādhi of extinction: A state of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) in which the practitioner enjoys the pleasures of non-thought. *See also samādhi.*

samādhi of “universal equality”: A state of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) in which the practitioner can see innumerable buddhas. *See also samādhi.*

Samantabhadra (“Universally Gracious”): The name of a great bodhisattva who represents the ultimate principle, meditation, and practice of all buddhas, the embodiment of adherence to vows of great compassion; also the right-hand attendant of Śākyamuni; often portrayed mounted on a white elephant.

Saṃghavarman (ca.third century): A monk from India or Samarkand who went to China in 245 and translated several sutras into Chinese, including the *Larger Sutra*.

samsara: The cycle of birth and death through which beings transmigrate due to karmic causes; the world of suffering, contrasted with the liberation of nirvana that can be attained through following the Buddha’s teachings. *See also* five evil realms; karma; nirvana; three evil realms; three worlds.

sangha: The Buddhist monastic order; in a more general sense, the larger community of Buddhist followers. Capitalized, the term is one of the Three Treasures. *See also* four groups of followers; Three Treasures.

śāri: A talking bird; possibly a mynah.

Śāriputra: One of the leading disciples of the Buddha, especially renowned for his wisdom.

Sarvārthadarśa (“Seeing All Benefits”): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

seven kinds of jewels: Gold, silver, beryl, coral, amber, agate, and ruby.

seven practices leading to enlightenment: 1) Distinguishing the true Dharma from wrong views; 2) making efforts to practice the true Dharma; 3) rejoicing in the true Dharma; 4) eliminating torpor and attaining ease and relaxation; 5) practicing mindfulness to maintain the equilibrium of concentration and insight; 6) concentration; and 7) mental detachment from external objects, thereby establishing a serene mind.

shang: The second tone of the Chinese pentatonic scale.

Siṃha (“Lion”): The name of a buddha in the nadir.

single path: The single path leading to buddhahood.

six acts of accord and respect: The six compassionate acts of a bodhisattva toward the sangha in order to save people—1) performing the same bodily practices as others, such as worshiping the Buddha; 2) doing the same verbal acts, such as chanting sutras; 3) doing the same mental acts, such as faith; 4) observing the same precepts; 5) sharing the same view, such as the view of emptiness; 6) sharing the same provisions, such as food. *See also* bodhisattva; precepts; sangha.

six domestic animals: Horses, cows, sheep, dogs, pigs, and chickens.

six forms of mindfulness: The six objects of mindfulness or contemplation—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha (the Three Treasures); precepts (*śīla*); giving (*dāna*); and heaven with the desire to be reborn there. *See also* contemplation.

six heavens of the world of desire: In ascending order, they are—1) Heaven of the Four Kings, 2) Heaven of Thirty-three Gods, 3) Yāma Heaven, 4) Tuṣita Heaven, 5) Heaven of Enjoyment of Pleasures Provided by Themselves (Nirmāṇarati), and 6) Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others. *See also* Buddhist Cosmology in Appendix, p. 103; Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others; Heaven of the Four Kings; Heaven of Thirty-three Gods; three worlds; Tuṣita Heaven; Yāma Heaven.

six *pāramitā*s: The six types of practices to be perfected by bodhisattvas on the path to Buddhahood—1) giving (*dāna*), 2) precepts (*śīla*), 3) patience (*kṣānti*), 4) effort (*vīrya*), 5) meditation (*samādhi*), and 6) wisdom (*prajñā*). *See also* bodhisattva; precepts; *samādhi;* wisdom.

six sense organs: The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

six supernatural powers: Six transcendent faculties attributed to buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats—1) the ability to go anywhere at will and to transform oneself or objects at will, 2) divine eyes capable of seeing anything at any distance, 3) divine ears capable of hearing any sound at any distance, 4) the ability to know others’ thoughts, 5) the ability to know one’s former lives and those of others, and 6) the ability to destroy all evil passions. *See also* evil passions; three kinds of transcendent knowledge.

sixth heaven: The sixth heaven of the world of desire, i.e., the Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Manifestations by Others; three worlds.

skillful means (*upāya*): The various expedient methods by which buddhas or bodhisattvas, out of their compassion, teach sentient beings according to their spiritual capacity and intelligence and guide them to enlightenment. *See also* bodhisattva; enlightenment.

special qualities: The eighteen special qualities of a buddha—1) absence of bodily imperfection, 2) unmistakable speech that guides human beings to enlightenment, 3) perfect concentration, 4) nondiscriminative thought, 5) a perfectly settled mind, 6) knowing and accepting all *dharma*s, 7) limitless desire to save all sentient beings, 8) unceasing effort to save sentient beings, 9) spiritual communication with other buddhas, 10) omniscience, 11) complete liberation from all bondage, 12) complete knowledge of all aspects of liberation, 13) manifestation of excellent physical forms to guide sentient beings to salvation, 14) employment of subtle words to teach sentient beings, 15) pure mental acts to teach sentient beings, 16) complete knowledge of the past lives of all beings, 17) complete knowledge of future events, and 18) complete knowledge of all events in the present.

sprinkling the nectar: The Buddha sprinkles nectar on the heads of bodhisattvas upon their attainment of the tenth stage. *See also* bodhisattva stages.

śrāvaka ("word-hearer"): Originally, a disciple of the Buddha, one who heard him expound the teachings directly; later, the term came to refer to one of the two kinds of Hinayana sages, along with *pratyekabuddha*s; generally, a Hinayana practitioner. *See also* Hinayana; *pratyekabuddha.*

Śrāvastī: A kingdom in central India where the Jeta Grove donated by Anāthapiṇḍada to the Buddha and his sangha was located, the present-day site of Sāhetmāhet in Gonda Province. At this place many Mahayana sutras were delivered by the Buddha, including the *Smaller Sutra on Amitāyus*. *See also* Anāthapiṇḍada; Mahayana.

stage of becoming a buddha after one more life (*eka-jāti-pratibaddha*): The stage of spiritual development in which the practitioner has reached the highest bodhisattva stage and is destined to become a buddha in the next life. *See also* bodhisattva stages.

stage of joy (*pramuditā*): The first of the ten bodhisattva stages, attained by awakening undefiled wisdom. *See also* bodhisattva stages.

stage of non-retrogression (*avinivartanīya*): The stage in which a bodhisattva proceeds to highest enlightenment (*anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*) and will advance to Buddhahood without regressing to lower stages. *See also* bodhisattva stages; definitely assured stage.

stages of *śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s: The stages of advanced Hinayana practice. *See also* Hinayana; *pratyekabuddha; śrāvaka.*

stream-winner (*śrota-āpanna*): The first of the four stages of spirtual attainment in the Hinayana; one who has entered the stream of the Dharma by abandoning various wrong views. *See also* Hinayana.

stupa: A tomb mound or a shrine, sometimes containing relics of the Buddha.

Subāhu ("Having Well-developed Arms"): A disciple of the Buddha.

suchness (*tathatā*): The state of things as they really are, thusness; ultimate truth. *See also* naturalness; ultimate truth.

Śuddharaśmiprabha ("Brilliance of Pure Light"): The name of a buddha in the west.

Śuddhipanthaka: A disciple of the Buddha.

Sumerukalpa ("Sumeru-like"): The name of a buddha in the zenith.

sutra: Buddhist scriptures that contain the discourses of the Buddha. Capitalized, it refers to one of the three categories of the Buddhist canon, the Tripiṭaka. *See also* Tripiṭaka.

Svāgata ("Well-come"): A disciple of the Buddha.

Tathāgata ("Thus Come One"): One of the ten epithets for a Buddha, popularly construed as meaning "one who has come from thusness (suchness)." *See also* suchness; ten epithets for a Buddha.

ten directions: The four cardinal directions (north, east, south, west), the four intermediate directions (northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest), plus the zenith and nadir. As a general term, it refers to the entire sphere of reality; everywhere.

ten epithets for a buddha: 1) Tathāgata, 2) Arhat, 3) Fully Enlightened One, 4) Possessor of Wisdom and Practice, 5) Well-gone One, 6) Knower of the World, 7) Unsurpassed One, 8) Tamer of Beings, 9) Teacher of Gods and Humans, and 10) Enlightened and World-honored One.

ten evil deeds: The acts of killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying, uttering harsh words, uttering words that cause division among people, engaging in idle talk, greed, anger, and holding wrong views.

ten good deeds: Not killing, not stealing, not committing adultery, not lying, not uttering harsh words, not uttering words that cause division among people, not engaging in idle talk, not being greedy, not being angry, and not holding wrong views.

ten supernal powers: The powers attributed to a buddha, which confer perfect knowledge of 1) distinguishing right and wrong; 2) the karma of all sentient beings of the past, present, and future and its outcome; 3) all forms of meditation; 4) the superior and inferior capacities of sentient beings; 5) the desires and thoughts of sentient beings; (6) the different levels of existence of sentient beings; 7) the results of various methods of practice; 8) the transmigratory states of all sentient beings and the courses of karma they follow; 9) the past lives of all sentient beings and the nirvanic state of nondefilement; and 10) how to destroy the evil passions.

three acts of merit: 1) Worldly meritorious acts, such as filial devotion, respectfully serving one's teachers, and performing the ten good deeds; 2) meritorious acts performed in observing precepts, such as the five precepts; and 3) meritorious acts performed in practicing the Buddhist Way, such as believing in the law of causality and chanting the Mahayana sutras. *See also* five precepts; law of causality; Mahayana; ten good deeds; Way.

three defilements: Greed or craving, anger or hatred, and ignorance or delusion, often referred to as the "three poisons." *See also* affliction.

three distinct teachings: The teachings for bodhisattvas, *pratyekabuddha*s, and *śrāvaka*s, respectively. *See* also bodhisattva; *pratyekabuddha; śrāvaka*.

three evil realms: The three lowest of the five evil realms of samsaric existence—1) the realm of animals, 2) the realm of hungry ghosts, and 3) the realm of hell. *See also* five evil realms; samsara.

three grades of aspirants: The higher, middle, and lower grades of aspirants for birth in the Pure Land, as distinguished in the *Larger Sutra.* The higher grade are those who become monastics, perform meritorious deeds, and awaken aspiration for enlightenment by contemplating Amitābha; the middle grade are those who do only the first two of these acts; and the lower grade are those who do only the last. *See also* Amitābha; aspiration for enlightenment; Pure Land.

three insights: Insights into the nature of *dharma*s: 1) insight into reality through hearing the sacred sound, 2) insight into reality by coming into accord with it, and 3) insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s. *See also* insight into the non-arising of all *dharma*s.

three kinds of faith: The three aspects of faith mentioned in the *Contemplation Sutra* that are necessary for birth in Amitābha's Pure Land—1) sincere faith, 2) deep faith, and 3) faith that seeks birth in the Pure Land through transference of one's merit. *See also* Pure Land; transference of merit.

three kinds of transcendent knowledge: Three kinds of knowledge attained by buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats—1) knowledge of one's former lives and those of others, 2) knowledge of one's future and that of others, and 3) knowledge of the suffering of the present and the ability to remove its root cause, i.e., the evil passions. *See also* evil passions; six supernatural powers.

three pains: The three kinds of pain experienced by human beings—1) physical and mental pain caused by illness, hunger, thirst, etc.; 2) the pain of being separated from the objects of one's attachment; and 3) pain caused by various worldly vicissitudes.

three periods: Past, present, and future.

three realms of suffering. *See* three evil realms.

three refuges: The Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha (i.e., the Three Treasures), in which Buddhists vow to take refuge. *See also* Three Treasures.

three supernatural faculties: The three special faculties attained by a buddha, bodhisattva, or arhat: 1) the faculty of knowing one's former lives and those of others, 2) the faculty of knowing one's future destiny and that of others, and 3) the faculty of knowing all the suffering of the present life and of removing its root cause, i.e., the evil passions. *See also* arhat; bodhisattva; evil passions.

Three Treasures: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. *See also* three refuges.

three worlds: The three categories of samsaric states of existence. They are: the world of desire (*kāmadhātu*), this world of suffering in which beings are given to desire and attachment. There are six realms: the realm of *deva*s, which has six heavens; the realm of *asura*s; the realm of human beings; the realm of animals; the realm of hungry ghosts; and the realm of hell, of which there are eight levels (see Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, pp. 102–103). The world of form (*rūpadhātu*) is inhabited by those who have severed all desires but still experience the world as form; this world has four *dhyāna* heavens (see Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, pp. 102–103). The world of non-form (*ārūpyadhātu*) is inhabited by those who have severed all desires and attachment to form but have not yet attained enlightenment; this world has four levels (see Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 102).

transference of merit: Transferring one's merit toward the attainment of buddhahood; transferring one's merit to other beings for their benefit. In Pure Land Buddhism, Amitābha Buddha transfers his merit to sentient beings to enable them to attain birth in his Pure Land. *See also* Amitābha; Pure Land.

transmigration. *See* samsara.

Tripiṭaka (lit., "three baskets"): The three divisions of the Buddhist canon, the Sutras (the Buddha's teachings), the Vinaya (the monastic code), and the Abhidharma (discourses on Buddhist teachings).

Tripiṭaka Master: A monk who is well versed in the Buddhist scriptures.

Tuṣita ("Contentment") Heaven: The fourth of the six heavens of the world of desire, in which the future buddha Maitreya now dwells preaching the Dharma to *deva*s. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; *deva;* Maitreya; three worlds.

twelve divisions of the scriptures: The classical categorization of the twelve forms of Buddhist teachings—1) the Buddha's exposition of the Dharma in prose (*sūtra*), 2) verses that repeat ideas expressed in prose (*geya*), 3) verses containing ideas not expressed in prose (*gāthā*), 4) narratives of the past that explain a person's present state (*nidāna*), 5) narratives of the past lives of the Buddha's disciples (*itivṛttaka*), 6) narratives of the Buddha's past lives (*jātaka*), 7) accounts of miracles performed by a buddha or *deva* (*adbhuta-dharma*), 8) expositions of the Dharma through allegories (*avadāna*), 9) discussions of doctrine (*upadeśa*), 10) expositions of the Dharma by the Buddha without awaiting questions or requests from his disciples (*udāna*), 11) extensive and detailed expositions of principles of truth (*vaipulya*), and 12) prophecies by the Buddha regarding his disciples' future attainment of buddhahood (*vyākaraṇa*).

uḍumbara: A kind of fig tree that is said to bloom only once in three thousand years; used metaphorically to describe the rare appearance of a buddha.

ultimate truth: The perception of the ultimate reality of things as they really are, true suchness, the state of enlightenment in which ultimate truth is apprehended; as opposed to relative or conventional truth, which is unenlightened perception of reality. *See also* enlightenment; naturalness; suchness.

unconditioned nirvana: Ultimate truth or reality; the ultimate sphere of non-action; perfect nirvana. *See also* nirvana; ultimate truth.

universe of a thousand million worlds: One thousand worlds comprise a small one-thousand world, a thousand of these make a medium one-thousand world, and a thousand of these make a great one-thousand world. The universe of a great one-thousand world, i.e., of a thousand million worlds, comes under the care of one buddha.

Uruvilvākāśyapa ("Kāśyapa of Uruvilvā"): The eldest of the three Kāśyapa brothers, who first engaged in Brahmanical fire worship but later converted to Buddhism with his five hundred disciples.

Vaidehī: The wife of King Bimbisāra and mother of Ajātaśatru. In her later years she and the king were imprisoned by their son. This tragedy in the royal family of Magadha is recounted in the *Contemplation Sutra,* in which Vaidehī appeals to the Buddha to teach her the practices that will lead to birth in the Pure Land. *See also* Ajātaśatru; Bimbisāra.

Vaiśvānaranirghoṣa ("Universal Sound"): The name of a buddha in the north.

Vajra-god: A kind of *deva* possessing enormous physical power. Images of a pair of such gods often flank the entrances to temples.

Vakkula: A disciple of the Buddha.

Vāṣpa ("Tears, Vapor"): Sometimes mentioned as one of the ten earliest disciples of the Buddha.

Vedic scriptures: Refers to the four Vedas, the oldest Hindu scriptures.

Vimala ("Free of Defilement"): A disciple of the Buddha.

virtues of Samantabhadra: The meritorious practices, represented by Samantabhadra, that are performed by all bodhisattvas. *See also* Samantabhadra.

visualization: A meditative practice involving an elaborate, extensive mental visualization of a specific object of devotion, such as a buddha, bodhisattva, or buddha land.

Vulture Peak (Gṛdhrakūṭa): A mountain near Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha in the Buddha's time, where the Buddha delivered many important sutras, including the *Larger Sutra*. *See also* Magadha; Rājagṛha.

water possessing the eight excellent qualities: The water of the ponds in the Pure Land

has these eight qualities—it is pure, cool, smooth, sweet, moistening, comforting, thirst-quenching, and nourishing. *See also* Pure Land.

Way: The ultimate state of enlightenment; *bodhi;* also refers to the Buddhist path. *See also* enlightenment.

Well-gone One: One of the ten epithets for a buddha. *See* ten epithets for a buddha.

Western Land: Amitābha's Pure Land. *See also* Amitābha; Pure Land.

wheel of the Dharma: The Buddha-Dharma is compared to a wheel having eight spokes, which correspond to the Noble Eightfold Path, because 1) like the wheel of a wheel-turning monarch it crushes all evil, and 2) like a wheel in motion, it travels endlessly to bring the Dharma to all sentient beings. *See also* Dharma; Noble Eightfold Path; wheel-turning monarch.

wheel-turning monarch (*cakravartin*): The ideal king, as conceived of in India, who rules the world with a special wheel (*cakra*) that flies through the air and destroys his enemies; said to possess seven treasures: the wheel, elephants, horses, gems, ladies, attendants, and generals.

wisdom (*prajñā*): Transcendental wisdom, enlightened insight. *See also* six *pāramitā*s.

World-honored One (Bhagavān): One of the ten epithets for a buddha. *See* ten epithets for a buddha.

world of desire. *See* three worlds.

world of form. *See* three worlds.

yakṣa: A flesh-eating demon; one of the eight kinds of superhuman beings that protect Buddhism. *See also* eight kinds of superhuman beings.

Yāma ("Well Regulated") Heaven: The third of the six heavens of the world of desire. *See also* Appendix, Buddhist Cosmology, p. 103; six heavens; three worlds.

Yao-Qin dynasty (384–417): The Later Qin dynasty, ruled by the Yao family.

Yaśas ("Fame"): The name of a buddha in the nadir.

Yaśasprabha ("Light of Fame"): The name of a buddha in the south.

Yaśasprabhāsa ("Brilliance of Fame"): The name of a buddha in the nadir.

Yaśodeva ("God of Fame"): A disciple of the Buddha.

yojana: An Indian unit of distance, roughly equivalent to seven to nine miles, based on the distance the royal army could march in one day; one *yojana* is equivalent to forty *li*. *See also li.*

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Abbreviations

Ch.: Chinese
Skt.: Sanskrit
Jp.: Japanese
Eng.: Published title

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